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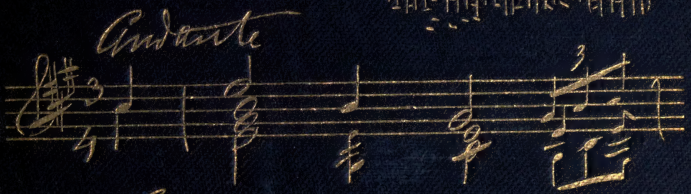
Ever
yours
Elizabeth Maguire

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P/6

MY MUSICAL LIFE.

"The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting towards eternity."

To maggie.

a Christmas Greeting

William Norris

1901

MY MUSICAL LIFE

BY THE

REV. H. R. HAWEIS, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "MUSIC AND MORALS," ETC.
"THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES," "SPEECH IN SEASON," "ARROWS IN THE AIR,"
"CURRENT COIN," "POETS IN THE PULPIT," "PET," "THE AMERICAN HUMORISTS,"
"ASHES TO ASHES," "THE KEY," ETC.

FOURTH EDITION

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To my Father,

THE REV. J. O. W. HAWEIS, M.A.

(PREBENDARY OF CHICHESTER),

TO WHOSE TIMELY AND THOUGHTFUL EFFORTS

I OWE MY EARLIEST MUSICAL TRAINING,

I Dedicate

THESE LATER STUDIES OF MY LEISURE HOURS.

PRELUDE.

PARABLES OF THE GOLDEN SEA
THE TIDAL WAVES BEAT UPON THE SHORES OF THE AGES
THEY ARE THE WAVES OF HUMAN FEELING
THE EBB AND FLOW OF EMOTION
TIMING THE PULSES OF THE HEART
THE WINDS RISE AND FALL
THE FITFUL BREATH OF PASSION
THE BLAST OF POWER
THE SIGH OF RAPTURE THE SWOON OF DEATH
THE CLOUDS GATHER AND PASS
PROPHETS OF SORROW HERALDS OF TEMPEST
SHADOWS OF PAIN AND LOSS
JOY LIES A LONELY WRECK
AND GRIEF IS LOUD
AND THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH STARS
BUT THE MORNING BREAKS
AND BEYOND THE SEA AND THE CLOUD RACK
GLOWS THE IMPENETRABLE BLUE
I STAND ON THE SHORE AND UTTER
PARABLES OF THE GOLDEN SEA

CONTENTS.

First Book.

EARLY DAYS.

I.—Norwood and London. 1846–1860.

		Page
1.	Self	3
2.	"Music and Morals"	4
3.	Tarisio	4
4.	Fiddle Shops	7
5.	Dr. Maitland	8
6.	The First Time	9
7.	The Great Exhibition of 1851	10
8.	A Trance	11
9.	The "Midsummer Night's Dream"	12
10.	The Mendelssohn Spell	14
11.	The Year 1847	15
12.	Mendelssohn's Death	16
13.	My Visions of Mendelssohn	16
14.	Nursery Fiddles	18
15.	First Lessons	19
16.	Early Practice	21
17.	A New Impulse	22
18.	Sainton, Piatti, Hill, Cooper	23

Page

19. Mdlle. Clauss 24
20. Bottesini 26
21. The Boy Joachim 28
22. Hullah 28
23. Miss Dolby 29
24. Mons. Jullien 30
25. Ernst 31
26. Sivori, Chatterton 33

II.—Brighton and the Isle of Wight. 1850–1856.

27. My Second Master 34
28. My Third Master 36
29. The Mystery of Teaching 37
30. My Last Master, Oury 38
31. Oury's Method 42
32. The Brighton Symphony Society 44
33. Oury on Jullien 44
34. Sainton on Mendelssohn and Beethoven 45
35. My Violin 46
36. Charm of Orchestral Playing 47
37. Freshwater, Isle of Wight 48
38. School at Freshwater 50
39. My Solos 52
40. At Farringford 53
41. Tennyson 55
42. My Visit to Tennyson in 1854 56
43. Mrs. Tennyson 60
44. The Link of Oblivion 62
45. Accompanyists 63
46. Music at Brighton in 1856 65
47. Playing at Parties 67
48. The Soloist must be seen 69
49. "*Moments Perdus*" 69
50. A Sacrifice 71
51. Brighton Taste 73
52. Musical Quality 73
53. Natural Gifts 74
54. Seaside Minstrels 75

III.—Cambridge. 1856–1859.

		Page
55.	Dr. Whewell and Sedgwick	77
56.	Whewell and Music	81
57.	My Neighbours	83
58.	I Play a Solo	84
59.	Old Dog Tray	86
60.	My Quartet Society	87
61.	William Kingsley and Turner	88
62.	"The Lion" and "The Bear"	90
63.	Newspaper Articles	91
64.	Old Venua: A Strange Visitor	92
65.	Venua's Talk	94
66.	A Concert Freak	97
67.	Music and Moonlight	98
68.	Mrs. Ellicott	100
69.	What doth it profit?	100

IV.—Italy. 1860.

70.	With Garibaldi	103
71.	Garibaldi's Hymn	104
72.	A Letter from Garibaldi	105
73.	Hair-breadth Escapes	105
74.	Music in Italy	107
75.	Alone at Milan	108
76.	Golden Nights	110
77.	A Strange Bell	111
78.	Full Moon	112

V.—Bethnal Green and Westminster. 1861–1864.

79.	A Sudden Change	113
80.	A Sacrifice	114
81.	An East End Parish	115
82.	John Richard Green	116
83.	Music and the Masses	116
84.	Last Appearances	118

Page

85. In Pace 120
86. New Duties 120
87. The Oratorical and Artistic Temperament 121
88. First Literary Successes 123
89. Writing 124
90. Howell's "Venetian Life" 125
91. Music and Morals 126
92. Why I print "My Musical Life" 128

Second Book.

BY THE GOLDEN SEA.

I.—Interlude on Recurrent Ideas.

93. A Sentence by F. D. Maurice 131
94. Mind-bias 132
95. Root Thoughts 133
96. A Retrospect 135

II.—The Rationale of Music.

97. The Eternal Why 136
98. How to discuss Music 136
99. Rough Elements of Sound 137
100. Noise 139
101. Musical Tone 140
102. Birth of Music 141
103. Expression the Imperative Mood 144
104. Art relieves Feeling 144
105. The Day and the Hour 145
106. Rise, Progress, and Decay 146
107. Music Latest Born 148
108. Secret of Music 149
109. Periods of Modern Music 150
110. Music and Emotion 151

Page

111. New Illustrations 152
112. Use of Music 155
113. Songs of the Temple 156
114. Songs of the Street 156
115. Music means Morals 157
116. Richter on Bellini 158
117. Refining Discipline 158
118. An English School of Music 159
119. Board School Music 160

III. Interlude on Sense Channels.

120. Unity of Sense 162
121. An Anonymous MS. 163
122. The Human Ear 163

IV.—Hearing Music.

123. Deaf and Blind 166
124. Deaf for Ten Minutes 167
125. The Musical Ear 169
126. Helmholtz on the Ear 170
127. What is the Musical Ear? 171
128. An Apology before the Curtain 172
129. Mrs. De Perkins "At Home" 173
130. In a Niche 174
131. You must not Talk.—Moral 174
132. Concerts and Ballads 176
133. The "Elijah" at Birmingham in 1846. Mendelssohn . . . 178
134. The Mixed Monster Concert 179
135. The Mixed Chamber Concert 179
136. Shadows of the Past 180
137. A Night in the Past 183
138. Italy 186
139. Holland 187
140. Emotion and the Painter 187
141. Magic of Music 188
142. Secret of the Auditory Nerve 189
143. Music in a Room 191

Page

144. Music and Space 191
145. Sound-Filtering 192
146. Beneficence of Music 194
147. Music as a Restorative 195
148. The Musical Healer 196
149. "Music and Morals" again 199
150. The Greeks' "Musical" Discipline 200
151. Mechanism of the Emotional Art 202
152. Tale of a "Song Without Words" 203
153. Lied Ohne Wörte, Book II. 4 204
154. Training of Abstract Emotion 207
155. Effect of the "Messiah" on the Masses 208
156. Give the People Music 209
157. The Key 212

Third Book.

CREMONA.

I.—Interlude on a Night at the Royal Institution.

158. My Violin 215
159. Latent Knowledge 216
160. Good Advice 216
161. Preparation for the Royal Institution 217
162. A Rare Collection 218
163. Packing-up 218

III.—Old Violins.

164. The Wood 220
165. How to select it 221
166. Rare Properties 222
167. A Rare Collection 222
168. Violin Anatomy 224
169. The Sound-bar 225
170. The Sound-post 226

Page

171. Strain of Strings and Neck 227
172. The Scroll 227
173. The Finger-board 228
174. The Purfling 228
175. The Varnish 229
176. The Bridge 230
177. The Sentiment of the Bridge 231
178. Violin strings 233
179. How to choose Strings 234
180. Violin Fascination 235
181. Violin History 237
182. An Elizabethan Violin 238
183. The Number of Strings 239
184. Violin Evolution 239
185. The Voice and the Violin 240
186. Transformation 241
187. Four Strings 242
188. The Italian Schools. 1520–1760. Duiffoprugcar 243
189. The Brescian School. 1520–1620. Gaspar di Salo . . . 244
190. Violin Carving 244
191. A Famous Gaspar described 246
192. G. P. Maggini 247
193. The Cremona School. 1550–1740 247
194. The Amati 248
195. The Guarnerii and Stradivarius 249
196. The Great Nicolas 250
197. Stradivarius 251
198. A Specimen Detail 252
199. The End of Stradivarius 253
200. The Great Joseph 255
201. The End of the Cremonese School 256
202. Florence, Bologna, Rome 257
203. The French School 258
204. The German School 258
205. The English School 259
206. Tone Qualities 260

III.—Interlude on a certain Loan Collection.

207. Relation to the Previous Discourse 264

IV.—A South Kensington Dream.

		Page
208.	Behind Glass	265
209.	Cremona Carving	266
210.	I revert to Violin History	266
211.	Sketch of Violin Progress	267
212.	Frets and Finger-boards	268
213.	The Viol d'Amore	269
214.	Sympathetic Wires	271
215.	The Quartett	271
216.	The "Little Violin" becomes Popular	273
217.	Rare Old Specimens	275
218.	The Story of Jacobus Stainer	277
219.	A few Names	278
220.	Character of Cremona Work	279
221.	Lost Conditions	283
222.	Good and Bad Fiddles	285
223.	The Mystic Rule of Thumb	286
224.	Dear to the Player	288
225.	The Soul of a Cremona	288
226.	Forgeries	289
227.	Violin Bows	290
228.	About Fiddlers	291
229.	The Clergy as Fiddlers	293
230.	Kings and Fiddlers	294
231.	Ladies as Violinists	296
232.	Violinists and their Violins	298
233.	A Criticism on the Loan Collection	300
234.	The Messie	301
235.	The Pucelle	304
236.	Antonius and Joseph	305
237.	Dragonetti's Basses	306
238.	Some Little Mistakes	306
239.	Prices	308

V.—Interlude on the Oblivion of Great Men.

240.	Houses	311
241.	I visit Mendelssohn's House	312

Page

242. Who regards the Dead? 313
243. The Vitality of Stradivarius 313

VI.—Stradivarius of Cremona—His House.

244. My Thoughts at Brescia 314
245. Not Known 317
246. To the Cathedral 318
247. The Citizens of Cremona 319
248. I enter the House of Stradivarius 322
249. Stradivarius's Workshop 324
250. A Nail in a Beam 326
251. "Addio!" 327

VII.—Interlude on some Old Violin Players.

252. Violins and Violinists 329
253. Lulli 330
254. Corelli 331
255. Baltzar and the Bannisters 332
256. Tartini 332
257. Boccherini 335
258. Viotti, Rode, De Beriot 336
259. Kreutzer, Spohr, Paganini 337

VIII.—Paganini.

260. A New Apparition 339
261. Paganini Père et Mère 340
262. Severe Early Training 341
263. The Despair of his Masters 342
264. Playing and Gambling 344
265. How he lost and won Violins 345
266. A Respite from Toil 346
267. Study and Composition 347
268. Feeling after Effect 348
269. Playing on One String 349
270. His Prodigious Facility 350

Page

271. A Narrow Escape 351
272. His Appearance 351
273. A Meeting 353
274. In the Storm 354
275. By Night 356
276. On the Guitar 356
277. Personal Traits 357
278. Art and Life 362
279. Enter Paganini 364
280. His Independence 366
281. Paganini and Spohr and Lafont 367
282. His Health 368
283. Letter from his Mother 369
284. Visit to Naples 370
285. Inhuman Treatment. Travels 370
286. Triumphs at Vienna 372
287. Paganini Legends 374
288. Paganini's Morals 375
289. Paganini's Temperament 376
290. At Paris 379
291. Paganini in London 381
292. The Critics at Sea 382
293. Paganini's Specialities 383
294. Losses 385
295. The Night cometh 386
296. The End 387
297. Over the Dead 388

Fourth Book.

THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.

I.—Interlude on the Title of the Fourth Book.

II.—Wagner.

298. Wagner and Beethoven 393
299. Unity of the Arts 394

Page

300. Wagner the Boy 395
301. Expression 396
302. The Arts Defective 398
303. Individualism of Shakspere 399
304. The Greek Theatre 400
305. The Soul of the Greek Drama 402
306. Greek Chorus 403
307. The Individual in the Universal 404
308. Union of the Arts 405
309. Wagner's Theory summed up 406
310. Italian Opera analysed 407
311. Gluck and the Incorrigible Opera 409
312. The Musical Drama 410
313. Wagner's Masters 411
314. Wagner at Twenty 413
315. Rienzi 414
316. Wagner Mob Orator 415
317. The Romantic Movement 417
318. Wagner's Lost MS. 418
319. Wagner and Meyerbeer 419
320. Wagner in Paris 421
321. The Flying Dutchman, 1841 422
322. First Success, Rienzi, 1842 424
323. Tannhäuser, 1845 425
324. Failures 427
325. Lohengrin, 1847 427
326. Neglect and Exile, 1847–57 429
327. London, 1855 429
328. Von Bülow's Influence, 1874 431
329. Cipriani Potter on Wagner 431
330. The Tetralogie Meistersinger Tristan 432
331. Wagner's Egotism 434
332. Was Wagner Vain? 436
333. Wagner and the Queen 436
334. Wagner at Home 437
335. Wagner's Generosity 438
336. Victor Hugo on Wagner 439
337. Wagner's Light-heartedness 439
338. Kindness to Animals 439

Page

339. Wagner's Unselfishness 440
340. Joukowski and Wagner 441
341. Wagner and the Singers 441
342. An Evening at Wagner's House 442
343. Wagner's Theatre 444
344. Wagner's Conducting 445
345. The Festivals of 1876–82 447
346. The Wagner Mania in London 447
347. To Venice 448
348. His Temperamental Vigour 449
349. His Morning 449
350 His Afternoon 450
351. Wagner and Byron love Light 452
352. Liszt's Visit to Wagner 453
353. Wagner beloved by the People 453
354. Strange Presentiment 454
355. The Approach of Death 455
356. Death 456
357. Reception of the News 458
358. The Gondolier's Tribute 459
359. Funeral Honours 459
360. Arrival of the Coffin at Bayreuth 461
361. The Grave 461
362. I visit Wagner's Grave 462

III.—Interlude on the Last Crown.

363. Elaborate Scoring 465
364. Last Photograph 466
365. Speeches by Liszt and Wagner 466

IV.—Parsifal.

366. The Mystic Union 468
367. Montsalvat 470
368. Titurel 470
369. Klingsor 471
370. The Fall of Amfortis 471
371. I enter the Theatre 472

First Act.

	Page
372. Orchestral Prelude	472
373. Sunrise	473
374. Kundry	474
375. Amfortis approaches	475
376. Gurnemanz's Narrative	476
377. Kundry's Narrative	476
378. Kundry's Sleep	477
379. Passage to Montsalvat	477
380. The Hall of the Knights	479
381. The Holy Grail	480
382. This is my Blood	481
383. The Spiritual Impression made	482
384. The Meaning of the Guileless Fool	483

Second Act.

385. Klingsor Prelude	485
386. Apparition of Kundry	485
387. A Garden of Girls	486
388. The New Love Duet. An Analysis	487
389. Kundry baffled	489
390. Solemn Thoughts	490

Third Act.

391. Prelude of the Years	491
392. The Summer Land	492
393. Waking of Kundry	492
394. The Black Knight	493
395. A Sacred Picture	494
396. The Kiss of Peace	495
397. Amfortis is healed	496
398. A Touching Incident	497

V.—Interlude on Bayreuth City.

399. Past and Present	499
400. The Plague	500

Page

401. Modern Bayreuth 501
402. The Old Opera-House 502
403. Smells of the City 502
404. Enterprize of Bayreuthers 503
405. Jean Paul waits 504

VI.—The Nibelung's Ring.

I.—Rheingold.

406. The Heat in 1876 505
407. Wagner Worship 506
408. The Rhine Girls 507
409. Rheingold 507
410. Subtle Art 508
411. Plot 509
412. The Colour Art 510
413. The Rainbow Scene 511

II.—Walküre.

414. Enter the King and Wagner 512
415. Siegmund and Sieglinde 512
416. Brünnhilde's Mission 514
417. The Fight 515
418. In the Café 516
419. The Walküre Chorus 517
420. The Sleep of the Walküre 518

III.—Siegfried.

421. Wagner's Recitative 519
422. Mime works 520
423. Mime and Siegfried 521
424. The Welding of the Sword 521
425. The Dragon's Cave 522
426. Singfried Apart 523
427. Mise-en-scène 523
428. A Sorry Dragon 524

Page
429. Bird Music in Summer Land 524
430. Contrasts 525
431. Love Duets 526
432. The Surrender 526

IV.— Götterdämmerung.

433. The Vision of the Norns 528
434. Siegfried leaves Brünnhilde 528
435. The House of Hagen 529
436. Capture of Brünnhilde 530
437. The Murder 531
438. The End 531
439. A Speech by Wagner 533

VII.—Interlude on Tannhäuser and Lohengrin.

440. Wagner's Music, 1860 538
441. The Dramas placed 539
442. Ideal Types 540

VIII.—Tannhäuser.

443. Use of Myth 541
444. Tennyson and Wagner 542
445. Defects of Protestantism 542
446. Our Church and her Sermons 543
447. The Overture to Tannhäuser 544
448. The Venusberg 546
449. Close 547

First Act.

450. Venus 548
451. Tannhäuser and Venus 549
452. The Parting 550
453. Change to the Upper Earth 551
454. Pilgrims pass 552
455. Hunters pass 553

Second Act.

		Page
456.	Elizabeth	554
457.	The Landgrave	557
458.	The Processional March	557
459.	The Minstrel's Music	558
460.	Chivalry, the World, the Church	558
461.	Tannhäuser splits on the Rock	560
462.	To Rome!	562

Third Act.

463.	The Wayside Crucifix	563
464.	Enter Tannhäuser	565
465.	Tannhäuser's Confession and Death	565
466.	Philosophy of Tannhäuser	568

IX.—LOHENGRIN.

467.	The Blood Royal or Real	569
468.	The Depth of the Symbol and its Legend	570
469.	The Story of the Blood	571
470.	Montsalvat and Lohengrin	572
471.	The Swan Legend and Elsa	573
472.	Lohengrin Prelude	573
473.	The Conception of "Lohengrin" analysed	574
474.	Analysis of Prelude	576

First Act.

475.	By the Scheldt	578
476.	Enter the King	579
477.	Enter Elsa	580
478.	Will he come?	582
479.	The Swan and the Knight	582
480.	Surgit Amare Aliquid	584
481.	The Duel	584
482.	The Close of Act I.	585

Second Act.

	Page
483. Ortrud and Telramund	586
484. Elsa sings	587
485. Latet Anguis	588
486. The Morning comes	589
487. The Crowd assembles	590
488. Conspiracy	591
489. Enter Pages	591
490. Treachery	592
491. Poison instilled	594

Third Act.

492. Introduction to Act III.	594
493. The Bridal Chorus	595
494. *Vie Intime*	596
495. Only a Woman!	597
496. What 's in a Name.	598
497. An exceeding Bitter Cry	599
498. Murder!	600
499. The King in Council	601
500. Enter Elsa	602
501. "I am Lohengrin"	603
502. The Swan! The Swan!	604
503. *Exit* Lohengrin	605
504. Conclusion and Summary	605

X.—Interlude on Phenomenal Players.

505. The *First* Men	607
506. Liszt and Piano Manufacture	608

XI.—Liszt.

507. Who has heard Liszt?	609
508. Liszt embodies an Epoch	610
509. 1811. The Comet Year	611
510. "Learn the Piano"	612
511. Character	612

Page

512. The Wherewithal 613
513. The Wide, Wide World 614
514. Many Masters 614
515. First Appearances 615
516. The Kiss of Beethoven 616
517. Cherubini and Liszt 617
518. Prodigious 617
519. George IV. and Liszt 618
520. A Change 619
521. Death of his Father 620
522. Care of his Mother 620
523. Unsettled Conditions 621
524. A Female Form! 622
525. Love and Grief 623
526. "Death of Young Liszt" 624
527. Revolution and Resurrection 624
528. Paganini and the Age 625
529. Liszt withdraws Himself 628
530. Liszt and Thalberg 628
531. Reaction 629
532. Liszt and de Lamennais 629
533. The Mission of Art 630
534. Liszt and Chopin 630
535. Liszt on Chopin 632
536. The Elements of the Music of the Future 632
537. Liszt and the Beggars 634
538. The Dignity of Artists 636
539. Liszt, Czar Nicholas, and Louise Philippe 637
540. Liszt and George Sand 638
541. The Countess D'Agoult 638
542. "Liszt or the Devil" 639
543. Liszt's Challenge to Milan 640
544. Disillusion 641
545. Italy, Austria, Russia 642
546. Beethoven's Statue 643
547. Liszt's Princely Munificence 643
548. Dejection and Revival 644
549. Wagner 644
550. Liszt at Seventy-two 645

A Leaf from my Diary.

		Page
551.	I enter the Villa d'Este	646
552.	Kind Enquiries	647
553.	A Glorious View	649
554.	Into the Garden	650
555.	A Chat on Bells	651
556.	Liszt plays to Me	652
557.	*Abbate and Il Reverendo*	654
558.	Anecdotes	655
559.	Liszt on Richter, Meyerbeer, Wagner, and Mendelssohn	657
560.	Paganini and Bottesini, &c.	660
561.	Bülow, Rubinstein, and Mediocrities	661
562.	Liszt speaks of Chopin	661
563.	Liszt plays Chopin to me	663
564.	"I am too Old"	666
565.	All Souls Day	667
566.	Liszt at Rome	668
567.	Liszt on Rubinstein, Menter, Wirtz	669
568.	Liszt and the American Lady	671
569.	Good Night	672

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	Page
Richard Wagner	*Frontispiece*
Fac-simile of Garibaldi's Handwriting	104
Cremona Violins	256
Violin Shapes and Bows	272

First Book.

EARLY DAYS.

First Book.

EARLY DAYS.

I.

NORWOOD AND LONDON.

1846–1850.

I THINK it was Lord Beaconsfield who said that a man was usually interesting in proportion as his talk ran upon what he was familiar with; and that as a man usually knew more about himself than about anything else, he seldom failed to be tolerable if his self-centred talk turned out to be unaffected and sincere. To talk about one's self and to be dull is nevertheless possible. In the early pages of this volume I shall have to do the first to a considerable extent; let me hope to avoid the second.

1. SELF.

My Musical Life is a companion volume to *Music and Morals*. That book made me many friends, and, I hope, few enemies. The public was kind, and the publishers were liberal. *Music and Morals* is now (1883) in its 12th edition.

2. "MUSIC AND MORALS."

Music is not the business of my life, but it remains its sweetest recreation; and there is one opinion which used to be widely held by my friends in the old days, and to which I subscribed for many years. Nature, they often said, intended me for a violinist. In fact, my musical life starts from the violin; and, "Stradivario duce"—Stradivarius leading the way—I feel inspired, "after long years," to retrace with a certain keen pleasure these labyrinthine passages of Musical Memory.

There is something about the shape of a violin—its curves, its physiognomy, its smiling and genial ʃ ɭ's —which seems to invite and welcome inspection and handling.

Tarisio, the Italian carpenter, came under this fascination to good purpose. He began by mending old fiddles; he played himself a little; he got more enamoured of these mysterious, lifeless yet living companions of his solitude, until he began to "trade in fiddles."

3 TARISIO.

At the beginning of this century, hidden away in old Italian convents and wayside inns, lay the masterpieces of the AMATI, STRADIVARIUS, the GUARNERII, and BERGONZI, almost unknown and little valued. But TARISIO's eye was getting cultivated. He was learning to know a fiddle when he saw it.

"Your violino, signor, requires mending?" says the itinerant pedlar, as he salutes some monk or padre known to be connected with the sacristy or choir of Pisa, Florence, Milan. "I can mend it."

Out comes the Stradivarius, with a loose bar or a split rib, and sounding abominably.

"Dio mio!" says TARISIO, "and all the blessed saints! but your violino is in a bad way. My respected father is prayed to try one that I have, in perfect and beautiful accord and repair; and permit me to mend this worn-out machine."

And TARISIO, whipping a shining, clean instrument out of his bag, hands it to the monk, who eyes it and is for trying it. He tries it; it goes soft and sweet, though not loud and wheezy, like the battered old Strad. TARISIO clutches his treasure.

The next day back comes the pedlar to the cloister, is shown up to the padre, whom he finds scraping away on his loan fiddle.

"But," he exclaims, "you have lent me a beautiful violino, and in perfect order."

"Ah! if the father would accept from me a small favour," says the cunning TARISIO.

"And what is that?"

"To keep the violino that suits him so well, and I will take in exchange the old machine which is worn out, but with my skill I shall still make something of it!"

A glass of good wine, or a lemonade, or black coffee, clinches the bargain. Off goes TARISIO, having parted with a characterless German fiddle—sweet and easy-going and "looking nice," and worth now about £5—in perfect order, no doubt,—and having secured one of those gems of Cremona which now run into £300. Violin-collecting became the passion of TARISIO's life. The story has been told by MR. CHARLES READE, and all the fiddle-world knows how TARISIO came to Paris with a batch of old instruments, and was taken up by CHANOT and VUILLAUME, through whose hands passed nearly every one of those *chefs-d'œuvre* recovered by TARISIO in his wanderings, which now are so eagerly contended for by English and American millionaires, whenever they happen to get into the market.

I have heard of a mania for snuff-boxes—it was old LABLACHE's hobby. There are your china-maniacs, and your picture-maniacs, and your old-print connoisseurs who only look at the margin, and your old-book-hunters who only glance at the title-page and edition, and your coin-collectors, and your gem-collectors, who

are always being taken in; but for downright fanaticism and "gone-cooniness," if I may invent the word, commend me to your violin-maniac. He who once comes under that spell, goes down to the grave with a disordered mind.

4. FIDDLE SHOPS.

I said that I was, perhaps, intended for a violinist by nature. I can understand TARISIO's passion, though I never followed out that particular branch of it which led him to collect, repair, and sell. I could not buy violins—the prices have risen since the days of the Italian pedlar. I could not cheat people out of them; the world was too knowing for that,—and then I was too virtuous. I could not "travel" in violins. It was not my vocation; and one may in these days go far and get little—for it is now about as easy to find a STRADIVARIUS as a CORREGGIO. But long before I had ever touched a violin I was fascinated with its appearance. In driving up to town as a child—when, standing up in the carriage, I could just look out of the window—certain fiddle shops hung with mighty rows of violoncellos attracted my attention. I had dreams of these large editions—these patriarchs of the violin, as they seemed to me. I compared them in my mind with the smaller tenors and violins. I dreamed about their brown, big, dusty bodies and affable good-natured-looking heads and grinning ʃ ʅ 's. These violin shops were the great points watched for on each

journey up to London from Norwood, where I spent my early days.

5. DR. MAITLAND.

We passed through Kennington. Sometimes we used to stop at a friend's house overlooking the common. He was old, quaint, and musical. His name was Dr. Maitland—the celebrated author of *The Dark Ages*. An organ, with black keys where the piano's are white, and white where the piano's are black, stood in the hall. This instrument was atrociously out of tune, but I used always to pump it full of wind whenever I got the chance, and let off as many of the discordant pipes as possible before I could be stopped. The old gentleman had a fiddle, and a couple of friends used sometimes to look in and bring theirs, and they played Hasse's and Corelli's trios. I remember at that early age discovering the rudiments of the then famous Jullien's "Bridal Waltz" in a movement of old Hasse. Considering the great dearth of respectable violin music for beginners, I have often wondered why those simple and severe gigues and sarabands are not more often utilised. In any sale of old music, or at second-hand music-shops, certain neatly-bound, though time-worn and time-honoured "sets," can still be picked up. Though stiff and formal, as it were, with starched frills and periwigs and powder, what richness of idea, what elegant form, what severe development! Men were feeling their way into the paradise of modern music;

but all was new to them; they do not disguise it, the naïve delight in effects repeated again and again with consummate gravity and gusto, *because* they were new, the placid contentment with a simple flowing bit of melody, and the frequent employment of the *perfect cadence*, in season and out of season, reminding one that only 333 years had passed away since Monteverde had laid the foundation of modern music by that famous discovery.*

6. THE FIRST TIME.

To a *blasé* world it is refreshing to go back and keep company with those old pioneers of art, and realise sympathetically with them the joy of doing a thing for the first time. The first time! What heights and depths are there in those three short monosyllables! The first time your soul has thrilled to eloquence, the first time a poetical thought has kindled you, the first time you noticed the charm of a woman's society, the first time your pulses quickened at her approach, the first time you found a congenial friend, the first time you perceived in colour and sound something which went beyond the eye or the ear and became the interpreter of the soul. The joy of the explorer as he sails into an unknown sea, the ecstasy of the astronomer as a new planet floats into the telescope, the thrill of the experimentalist who combines with a new result substances which from the beginning of time have never been thus brought together, the glow of the historian

* See *Music and Morals*, Second Book, "From Ambrose to Handel."

when, after poring over his facts, the meaning of them dawns upon him, and a theory is born once and for ever which is destined to introduce order and meaning into what before was chaos!

Youth is the great season of surprises, as it certainly is of delights. There never were such buttercup fields and straw-
7. berry ices as in the days of my childhood. Men
THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851. try to make hay now, but it is poor work; and as for the modern ices, they are either frozen amiss or ill-mixed. They are not good enough for me, who can remember what they were in the Exhibition of 1851. One of my keenest musical impressions is connected with that marvellous show. I shall never see such another. As I stood in the gallery of the great crystal transept and looked down upon a spectacle such has been witnessed since, but had never before been seen, a feeling of intoxication—there is no other word for it—came over me. That moving thronging mass of gaily-dressed people below, fading away into the distance, the sunshine that filled that opaline building, the glittering sheen reflected from a million facets as of diamonds, flecking with rainbow hues the vapours which dimmed the long perspective. The murmur of that echoing, moving throng beneath, is still in my ears; it mingles with the splashing of fountains that rose from vast shining basins and radiant cones amid tropical foliage. The Oriental stalls, the hangings, the gaudy red flags white

lettered, the decorated produce of many Nations arranged in what appeared to me to be magic grottoes of marvellous wealth and beauty; the snowy statues, many of them colossal, standing out in bold relief against green palms, or Eastern cloth of gold, or crimson and azure tapestries—all this rises before me as I write.

8. A TRANCE.

I remember perfectly well falling into a kind of dream as I leant over the painted iron balcony and looked down on this splendid vista. The silver-bell-like tones of an Erard—it was the 1,000 guinea piano—pierced through the human hum, and noise of splashing waters, but it was a long way off. Suddenly, in the adjoining gallery, the large organ broke out with a blare of trumpets that thrilled and riveted me with an inconceivable emotion. I knew not then what those opening bars were. Evidently something martial, festal, jubilant, and full of triumph. I listened and held my breath to hear MENDELSSOHN's "Wedding March" for the first time, and not know it! To hear it when half the people present had never heard of MENDELSSOHN, three years after his death, and when not one in a hundred could have told me what was being played—that is an experience I shall never forget. As successive waves of fresh inexhaustible inspiration flowed on, vibrating through the building without a check or a pause, the peculiar Mendelssohnian spaces of cantabile melody alternating as they do in that march with

the passionate and almost fierce decision of the chief processional theme, I stood riveted, bathed in the sound as in an element. I felt ready to melt into those harmonious yet turbulent waves and float away upon the tides of "Music's golden sea setting towards Eternity." The angel of TENNYSON's Vision might have stood by me whispering,

> And thou listenest the lordly music flowing from the illimitable years.

Someone called me, so I was told afterwards, but I did not hear. They supposed that I was following, they went on, and were soon lost in the crowd. Presently one came back and touched me, but I did not feel. I could not be roused, my soul was living apart from my body. When the music ceased the spell slowly dissolved, and I was led away still half in dreamland. For long years afterwards the "Wedding March," which is now considered *banale* and clap-trap by the advanced school, affected me strangely. Its power over me has almost entirely ceased. It is a memory now more than a realisation—

> eheu! fugaces, Posthume,
> Posthume, labuntur anni—

9. THE "MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM."

This was in 1851; but it must have been about the year 1846 that I was taken up to a concert at Exeter Hall, and heard there for the first time what seemed to me to be music of unearthly sweetness. The room was crowded. I was far behind. I could only see the fiddle-sticks of the band in the distance.

Four long-drawn-out tender wails on the wind rising, rising; then a soft, rapid, flickering kind of sound, high up in the treble clef, broke from a multitude of fiddles, ever growing in complexity as the two fiddles at each desk divided the harmonies amongst them, pausing as the deep melodious breathing of wind instruments suspended in heavy slumbrous sighs their restless agitation, then recommencing till a climax was reached, and the whole band broke in with that magnificent subject which marks the first complete and satisfying period of musical solution in the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream!"

I was at once affected as I had never before been. I did not know then that it was the MENDELSSOHN mania that had come upon me. It seized upon the whole musical world of forty years ago, and discoloured the taste and judgment of those affected, for every other composer. The epidemic lasted for about twenty years at its height; declined rather uddenly with the growing appreciation of SCHUMANN, the tardy recognition of SPOHR, and the revival of SCHUBERT, receiving its *quietus* of course with the triumph of WAGNER. People *now* "place" MENDELSSOHN, *then* they worshipped him. Can I forget the heavenly close of that dream overture that day? MR. WILLY—that capital *chef d'orchestre*, so strict, so true, so sympathetic—was leading the band. The enchanting master, who was to pass away in the following year, FELIX MENDELSSOHN, was still alive. He might have been in London at the time. It was the very year he

conducted the "Elijah" at Birmingham. His works, at the moment when he was to be taken from us for ever, were being played in all the concert rooms in London; the D Minor and C Minor trios, his pianoforte concertos, the "Ruy Blas," the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream." That day the band played with a freshness and sympathy which made their own intense delight contagious. I can never hear the heavenly sleep-music at the close of the overture—which some dull people declare is borrowed from Weber—without the memory of those indescribable sensations carrying me back to that day in Exeter Hall.

When I heard the "Wedding March" later in 1851, without knowing whose or what it was, I had the same feeling. My spirit unconsciously saluted the genius who was destined to rule my musical aspirations for nearly thirty years. I was no doubt very young and ignorant and inexperienced. I was scraping HASSE, CORELLI, and modern opera tunes on a very bad fiddle at home. "La Pluie des Perles" and "La Tenerezza," and such-like pianoforte trifles of the period, seemed to me delicious, and HENRI HERZ's noisy firework-variations struck me as sublime. When STERNDALE BENNETT sat down to the piano one day and played two or three of the "Songs without Words," then great novelties, my perception failed me. I thought nothing of them nor of him. It was some years before I learned to prefer such

10. THE MENDELSSOHN SPELL.

pianoforte masterpieces to the showy and ephemeral schools of CZERNY, HERZ, and THALBERG. Why I was so instantly won by the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and so insensible at first to the "Songs without Words," is to me a riddle. After the first hearing of the overture I became a confirmed Mendelssohnian. I next heard "I would that my love," sung by two boys at the Brighton College, and I could listen to nothing else that night.

In 1847 I was staying at a house where the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream" was played as a pianoforte duet. It is arranged *à quatre mains* by MENDELSSOHN himself. Every evening it was my unspeakable delight to listen to it. The world at large was not then much excited about MENDELSSOHN—no one spoke of him out of certain musical cliques, and I was not in the cliques—but my curiosity was intensely excited; every scrap of news about him I fell upon eagerly. In those days I never read the papers. I never knew when MENDELSSOHN was in England; no one ever told me about the "Elijah" at Birmingham in 1846. No one took me to see or hear MENDELSSOHN when he was playing and conducting in London. Everything in this world seems unimportant until all is too late. The angels come in and the angels go out, but we never know them until they have withdrawn themselves from us. Then we look up to heaven, and our eyes fill with burning bitter tears.

11. THE YEAR 1847.

One night, just as the last notes of that overture had been struck on the piano, the door opened—it was at Guildford—someone came in with a newspaper —"MENDELSSOHN is dead." "Dead!" echoed the girl who had been playing the treble, her hand falling from the white keys as though suddenly paralysed—"dead!" She rose from the piano and walked to the other end of the room. I was watching her. I had desolate thoughts of my own. "I shall never see him now," I thought; "he will make no more music." The girl came back. She was silent and agitated; she could not control her emotion, and she left the room hurriedly. Others were there, but none seemed to feel it as she did, or as I did. It was news to them; to us it was a calamitous, irreparable, personal loss. Boys don't weep on these occasions, but I had my own thoughts, and I could understand another's.

12. MENDELSSOHN'S DEATH.

From that day MENDELSSOHN became my patron saint in music. I used to see his face in dreams, transfigured, splendid with inspired thought. He would come to me and smile, and speak kind words. I seemed then to have known him long, his step was familiar, the long tapering fingers of his beautiful white hand—that perfect hand of which MR. CHAPPELL has an exact cast—his slight figure, his wavy, sunny hair, his noble forehead, his large gentle eyes beaming with a certain

13. MY VISIONS OF MENDELSSOHN.

child-like fondness, full of unconscious simplicity, flashing at times with a fire so intense that it seemed to burn into the soul of every man in the orchestra. It was matter of common remark that when MENDELSSOHN conducted a perfectly sympathetic band, he would at times almost cease to move the *bâton*. Then, with his head a little on one side, himself listening like one entranced, his spirit alone seemed to sway the musicians, who followed every inflexion vibrating to every pulse of his meaning, as though he had placed them under some strange kind of magnetic control.

This recurrent vision of my companionship with MENDELSSOHN—the impossibility of believing him to be dead, our frequent and strange meeting in the land of dreams—remains one of the sweetest illusions of my early youth.

I never meet him now. I never see him. He never comes to me. Whenever I think of him, I think not of the living MENDELSSOHN of my dreams, but of the placid head lying pillowed in its last sleep as sketched by his friend, and since engraved. The summer wind seems stirring amongst the branches that wave close by, and underneath are written those words from the "Elijah" which he selected and set, not long before his death, to the divinest music, "And after the fire a still small voice, 'And in that still voice onward came the Lord' . . ."

* * * * *

As my ideas group themselves most naturally about my favourite instrument—the violin—I may as well resume

the thread of my narrative in connection with my earliest violin recollections. I became possessed, at the age of six years, of a small red eighteenpenny fiddle and stick, with that flimsy bow and those thready strings, which are made apparently only to snap, even as the fiddle is made only to smash. I thus early became familiar with the idol of my youth. But familiarity did not breed contempt. I proceeded to elicit from the red eighteenpenny all it had to give; and when I had done with it, my nurse removed the belly, and found it made an admirable dust-pan or wooden shovel for cinders, and, finally, excellent firewood. Many went that way, without my passion for toy fiddles suffering the least decline; nay, it rather grew by that it (and the fire) fed on. It may not be superfluous to add that I had by this time found means to make the flimsiest strings yield up sounds which I need not here characterise, and to such purpose that it became a question of some interest how long such sounds could be endured by the human ear. I do not mean my own. All violinists, including infants on eighteenpennies, admit that to their own ear the sounds produced are nothing but delightful; it is only those who do not make them who complain. As it seemed unlikely that my studies on the violin would stop, it became expedient that they should be directed. A full-sized violin was procured me. I have every reason to believe it was one of the worst fiddles I ever saw.

14. NURSERY FIDDLES.

I had played many times with much applause, holding a full-sized violin between my knees. I was about eight years old when the services of the local organist—a Mr. Ingram, of Norwood—were called in. His skill on the violin was not great, but it was enough for me; too much, indeed, for he insisted on my holding the violin up to my chin. The fact is, he could not play it in any other position himself, so how could he teach me? Of course the instrument was a great deal too large; but I strained and stretched until I got it up; for as it would not grow down to me, I had to grow up to it. And here I glance at the crucial question, Ought young children to begin upon small-sized violins? All makers say "Yes"; naturally, for they supply the new violins of all sizes. But I emphatically say "No." The sooner the child gets accustomed to the right violin intervals the better; the small violins merely present him with a series of wrong distances, which he has successively to unlearn. It is bad enough if in after years he learns the violoncello or tenor. Few violinists survive that ordeal, and most people who take to the tenor or 'cello after playing the violin keep to it. Either they have not been successful on the violin, or they hope to become so on its larger though less brilliant relation; but they have a perfectly true instinct that it is difficult to excel on both, *because of the intervals.* Yet, in the face of this, you put a series of violins of different sizes into the pupil's hand, on the ground that,

15. FIRST LESSONS.

as his hand enlarges with years, the enlarged key-board will suit his fingers better; but that is not the way the brain works—*the brain learns intervals.* It does not trouble itself about the size of the fingers that have got to stretch them. A child of even seven or eight can stretch most of the ordinary intervals on a full-sized violin finger-board. He may not be able to hold the violin to his chin; but he can learn his scales and pick out tunes, sitting on a stool and holding his instrument like a violoncello. Before the age of eight I found no difficulty in doing this. But the greater the difficulty the better the practice. The tendons cannot be too much stretched short of spraining and breaking. Mere aching is to be made no account of; the muscles can hardly be too much worked. A child will soon gain surprising agility, even on a large finger-board. Avoid the hateful figured slip of paper that used to be pasted on violin finger-boards in my youth, with round dots for the fingers. I remember tearing mine off in a fit of uncontrollable irritation. I found it very difficult, with the use of my eyes, to put my fingers on the dots, and even then the note was not always in tune, for of course the dot might be covered in a dozen ways by the finger-tips, and a hair's breadth one way or the other would vary the note. But the principle is vicious. A violin player's eyes have no more business with his fingers than a billiard player's eyes have with his cue. He looks at the ball, and the musician, if he looks at anything, should look at the notes, or at his

audience, or he can shut his eyes if he likes. It is his ears, not his eyes, have to do with his fingers.

16. EARLY PRACTICE.

I was about eight years old. My musical studies were systematic, if not well directed. Every morning for two hours I practised scales and various tunes at a double desk, my father on one side and I on the other. We played the most deplorable arrangements, and we made the most detestable noise. We played BEETHOVEN'S overture to "Prometheus," arranged for two fiddles, CALLCOTT'S German melodies with pianoforte accompaniment, and without the violoncello part, and CORELLI'S trios—also without the third instrument. I had somehow ceased to take lessons now. My father's knowledge of violin playing was exactly on a level with my own; his skill, he modestly owned, was even less, but had it not been for him I never should have played at all. Our method was simple. We sat for two hours after breakfast and scraped. In the evening, with the addition of the piano, we scraped again—anything we could get hold of—and we did get hold of odd things: LOCKE'S music to "Macbeth," old quadrilles, the "Battle of Prague," "God save the Emperor," and the "Huntsman's Chorus." I confess I hated the practising, it was simple drudgery—and put it in what way you will, the early stage of violin playing *is* drudgery—but it must be gone through with. And then I had my hours of relaxation. I used to walk up and down

the lawn in our garden playing tunes in my own fashion. I got very much at home on the finger-board, and that is the grand thing after all. No one ever gets at home there who has not begun young—not so young as I began, but at least under the age of twelve. I was soon considered an infant phenomenon on the violin, stood on tables, and was trotted out at parties, and I thus early got over all shyness at playing in public.

17. A NEW IMPULSE.

About this time I received a decided impulse from hearing a little girl, aged six, play on the violin exquisitely, and, as it seemed to me, prodigiously. There were three sisters, named TURNER; the eldest was only fifteen: two played the harp, and the youngest, a pretty child of six, played the violin. She had one of those miniature instruments—I believe a real Cremona—which can still occasionally be picked up at old violin shops. I remember the enthusiasm she created in some variations on airs from "Sonnambula," an opera in which JENNY LIND was making furor at the time in London. The poor little violinist was recalled again and again. It was past eleven, and as she came on in her little pink dress just down to her knees—holding her tiny fiddle—I recollect her raising it to her chin to begin again, but her little head lay so wearily on one side, and she looked so tired that her acute father came forward, perceiving that the child was quite worn out, drew her away, and in a few words

asked the people to let her off, adding that she ought to have been in bed an hour ago. I went home and tried those variations. I could not play them, but her playing of them gave me a new start. The finest lesson a young player can have is to hear good playing. So my father thought. We had both come to a kind of standstill in our music. We seemed, as he expressed it, to have *stuck*.

It now happily occurred to him to subscribe to certain quartet concerts then announced to take place at Willis's Rooms. In those days such things were novelties. With the exception of ELLA's Musical Union, then in its early days, I believe no public quartets had been given in London, except perhaps as a rare feature in some chamber concert.

18. SAINTON, PIATTI, HILL, COOPER.

SAINTON and PIATTI were then in their prime. I remember them as young men with their hair jet-black. My father wrote to M. SAINTON and asked whether he could admit me as a child half-price? M. SAINTON wrote back with the utmost politeness to say that to make such a reduction was not in accordance with their rule, but that under the circumstances he should be glad to conform to my father's wishes, especially as my father's sacred office—that of a clergyman—always inspired him with the greatest respect. Accordingly I went. These were amongst the choicest performances I heard in my boyhood. Nor, in some respects, have they ever been excelled in London since. What a quartet caste

that was! SAINTON, HILL, PIATTI, and COOPER. SAINTON, full of fire, brilliancy, and delicacy. COOPER with more tone, and a depth and passion which sometimes gave him the advantage over his brilliant French rival; but at the end of each concert we were always left balancing the merits of the two violinists, I inclining at times to the Englishman's fervour and *abandon,* but won back by the Frenchman's finish and execution. In SPOHR'S violin duets each had an opportunity for the display of his peculiar gift. Each was on his mettle; each gave his own reading to the same phrases in turn, and this friendly artistic rivalry was to me intensely exciting. HILL was a splendid tenor, full, round, and smooth in tone; and of PIATTI, prince of violoncellists, it is needless here to speak. Willis's Rooms were never full on these occasions; the "Monday Populars" had not yet cultivated the public taste up to chamber music of the classical sort. In that field PROFESSOR ELLA, with his Musical Union, had hitherto laboured alone. But everyone at Willis's Rooms was appreciative. The players all seemed to feel the atmosphere sympathetic and genial. Everyone played heartily, and the artists were the very best that could be got.

19
MDLLE. CLAUSS.

At each concert some bright particular star appeared as a soloist. I remember a fair-haired girl—fragile and apparently with no physique to commend attention on a grand pianoforte in a large

room. She came in a light blue muslin dress; sat down hurriedly, and tossed her curls back, looking straight up at the ceiling, whilst her fingers ran quickly in a slight prelude over the keys; then she plunged into a polonaise—or something of the kind; it might have been one of poor CHOPIN'S; it probably was, for he was about that time the rage, and quite in the last stage, dying of consumption in London and Scotch drawing-rooms, catching fresh colds every night, faultlessly attired in the miserable dress clothes and exposed shirt-front of the period. General attention had not then been called to his music, but about that time it was beginning to be fashionable in London, which in such matters tardily followed Paris, where CHOPIN had long been adored. I have since been told that MDLLE. CLAUSS—afterwards SZAVARDY CLAUSS—was cold and mechanical. I only heard her that once, and that was at Willis's Rooms, in, I believe, 1849. We did not think her cold then. From the moment she sat down until she sprang up with that same little flustered, uneasy manner which I noticed on her entrance, our eyes were riveted upon her, and we followed every bar and inflexion of the rapid execution. She seemed to play her piece through—as I have sometimes heard RUBINSTEIN—without taking breath, and we were forced to hold ours: as the artists sometimes say of a picture, "It is painted with one brush," so MDLLE. CLAUSS, never relaxed her mood or her grip; she held her composer and her audience absolutely fast until she had done with

both; then she seemed to push both away like one eager to escape.

On a certain afternoon there was neither solo pianist nor violinist down on the programme, but a player on the *contre-basso* was to occupy the vacant place. I remember my disappointment. Who is that tall, sallow-looking creature with black moustache and straight hair, with long bony fingers, yet withal a comely hand, who comes lugging a great double-bass with him? Someone might have lifted it up for him; but no, he carries it himself and hoists it lovingly on to the platform. He seems familiar with its ways, and will allow no one to help him. Why, there are SAINTON, HILL, PIATTI, and COOPER, all coming on without their fiddles. They seem vastly interested in this ungainly couple—the man and the big bass. He has no music. People behind me are standing up to get a better sight of him, although he is tall enough in all conscience. I had better stand up too; they are standing up in front of me, I shall see nothing!—so I stood on a chair. The first curiosity over, we all sat down, and, expecting little but a series of grunts, were astonished at the outset at the ethereal notes lightly touched on the three thick strings, *harmonics* of course, just for tuning. But all seemed exquisitely in tune with the piano.

20. BOTTESINI.

This man was BOTTESINI, then the latest novelty. How he bewildered us by playing all sorts of melodies in flute-like

harmonics, as though he had a hundred nightingales caged in his double-bass! Where he got his harmonic sequences from; how he hit the exact place with his long, sensitive, ivory-looking fingers; how he swarmed up and down the finger-board, holding it round the neck at times with the grip of a giant, then, after eliciting a grumble of musical thunder, darting up to the top and down again, with an expression on his face that never seemed to alter, and his face always calmly and rather grimly surveying the audience; how his bow moved with the rapidity of lightning, and his fingers seemed, like Miss Kilmansegg's leg, to be a judicious compound of clockwork and steam: all this, and more, is now a matter of musical history, but it was new then. I heard him play the "Carnival de Venice." I have heard him play it and some three or four other solos since at intervals of years. His stock seemed to me limited; but when you can make your fortune with half a dozen, or even a couple of solos, why play more? At one time he travelled with Lazarus, the matchless clarionet player; and I shall long remember the famous duet they invariably played, and which was always encored. Then Bottesini was fond of conducting and of composing. He got a good appointment in Egypt, and I suppose got tired of going "around" playing the same solos. I never wearied of his consummate grace and finish, his fatal precision, his heavenly tone, his fine taste. One sometimes yearned for a touch of human imperfection, but he was like a dead shot: he never

missed what he aimed at, and he never aimed at less than perfection.

Another afternoon there came on a boy with a shock head of light hair, who was received with a storm of applause. He was about sixteen, and held a violin. His name was JOACHIM. He laid his head upon his Cremona, lifted his bow arm, and plunged into such a marvellous performance of BACH's "Chaconne" as was certainly never before heard in London. The boy seemed to fall into a dream in listening to his own complicated mechanism. He shook out the notes with the utmost ease and fluency. It all seemed no trouble to him, and left him quite free to contemplate the masterpiece which he was busy in interpreting. MENDELSSOHN, after hearing him play the same masterpiece on one occasion, caught him in his arms and embraced him before the audience.

21. THE BOY JOACHIM.

I heard few concerts, and those usually of a poor sort, but I was ravenous for music, and each performance made an indelible impression upon my mind. I remember the very rooms — the "Horns" at Kennington, the dining-room at the Beulah Spa, Upper Norwood, a school-room at Brixton, our own school-room at Lower Norwood—where MR. HULLAH—looking (in 1846) very much as he does now (1883)—used occasionally to appear to superintend the classes on his then novel

22. HULLAH.

system. He usually, however, sent Mr. May, a very nice-looking young man, whom I have since met in London, and who is now "the same age as other people."

We used to trudge, my father, my sister, and self, through the snow to these classes. It was not an unmixed delight, like so many other things in this world that are so good for us. I wore socks and shoes, and my legs were bare to my knees. I invariably forgot my gloves, and my hands and legs were always blue with cold. Mr. Hullah himself was looked up to with a certain awe. He was a very great and celebrated man, but his affability in speaking to my father was surprising. I can remember his genial, kindly face; and his manner with children was quite gentle and friendly, considering who he was. But withal he was very business-like and systematic—and would have no nonsense.

23. MISS DOLBY.

About this time I heard Miss Dolby, then in her prime. How she did sing "Bonny Dundee," accompanying herself! What a voice! what a *bonhomie*! Always the true artiste, the estimable woman, the earnest worker. She had deserved her popularity, and retained her hold over the public longer than most singers. For how many years was she without a rival in oratorio! It would not be right to say that she "created" "O rest in the Lord," but it is true to say that for years the song was identified with her rendering of it, and that no subsequent singer has forsaken that rendering with any success.

Some have over-hurried it, and some have over-declaimed it. I have heard it actually preached at the people—an inexpressibly offensive method; but Miss Dolby hit the happy mean, with the truest perception of the right functions of oratorio art. She seemed personally filled with finely chastened but deep emotion, and she gave herself up to the expression of it *in the presence of others,* but not *at them.* She knew she was being over-heard and she expected sympathy; but she was not engaged in a propaganda, and did not aim at forcing conviction.

When Miss Dolby married M. Sainton, the world of art rejoiced over the union of two persons who had already passed a considerable portion of their busy lives in the service of the English people, and with that simple-minded devotion to the highest interests of the musical art which has done so much to raise the social status of musicians and ennoble the cause of music in England.

About this time I heard Jullien's band at the Surrey Zoological Gardens. The siege of Gibraltar was going on at night, with explosions and fireworks of inconceivable splendour; the great cardboard ships looked quite real to me—they were blown to pieces every evening—and the fort, with the sentinels pacing up and down on the ramparts, as large as life. The band played in a covered alcove not far from the water's brink. The effect on a summer's evening was delightful. Jullien's

24. MONS. JULLIEN.

enormous white waistcoat and heavily gilt arm-chair made a good centre. I can see his large, puffy, pale face and black moustache now, as he lolled back exhausted in the gorgeous fauteuil; then sprang up, full of fire, patted the solo cornet on the shoulder with "Pratiquez!" I happened to overhear him. "Pratiquez, il faut toujours pratiquez." BOTTESINI also played there in the still summer evenings, with magical effect, accompanied by JULLIEN'S band. Days and nights of my childhood, what music! what fireworks!

At this time JENNY LIND and ERNST were both in London; and LISZT, I believe, passed through like a meteor. I never heard any of them in their prime, though I did hear MADAME LIND-GOLDSCHMIDT sing the "Ravens" at a concert years afterwards, and it was my privilege to hear ERNST before he had lost his cunning, nor shall I ever hear his like again. He played once at Her Majesty's Opera House, when the whole assembly seemed to dream through a performance of the "Hungarian Airs." The lightest whisper of the violin controlled the house; the magician hardly stirred his wand at times, and no one could tell from the sound when he passed from the *up* to the *down* bow in those long cantabile notes which had such power to entrance me.

25. ERNST.

I heard ERNST later at Brighton. He played out of tune, and I was told that he was so shaken in nerve, that playing a BEETHOVEN quartet in private, and coming to a passage

of no great difficulty, which I have often scrambled through with impunity, the great master laid down his fiddle and declared himself unequal to the effort.

Great, deep-souled, weird magician of the Cremona! I can see thy pale, gaunt face even now! those dark, haggard-looking eyes, with the strange veiled fires, semi-mesmeric, the wasted hands, so expressive and sensitive, the thin, lank hair and emaciated form, yet with nothing demoniac about thee like PAGANINI, from whom thou wast absolutely distinct. No copy thou,—thyself all thyself—tender, sympathetic, gentle as a child, suffering, always suffering; full of an excessive sensibility; full of charm; irresistible and fascinating beyond words! Thy Cremona should have been buried with thee. It has fallen into other hands. I see it every season in the concert-room: MADAME NORMAN-NÉRUDA plays it. I know she is an admirable artist. I do not hear thy Cremona; its voice has gone out with thee, its soul has passed with thine.

. . . . .

In the night I hear it under the stars, when the moon is low, and I see the dark ridges of the clover hills, and rabbits and hares, black against the paler sky, pausing to feed or crouching to listen to the voices of the night.

. . . . .

Alone in the autumn woods, when through the shivering trees I see the angry yellow streaks of the sunset, and the dead leaves fall across a sky that threatens storm.

. . . . .

By the sea, when the cold mists rise, and hollow murmurs, like the low wail of lost spirits, rush along the beach.

. . . . .

In some still valley in the South, in midsummer, the slate-coloured moth on the rock flashes suddenly into crimson and takes wing; the bright-eyed lizard darts timorously, and the singing of the grasshopper never ceases in the long grass; the air is heavy and slumberous with insect life and the breath of flowers. I can see the blue sky—intense blue, mirrored in the lake—and a bird floats mirrored in the blue, and over the shining water comes the sound, breaking the singing silences of nature: such things are in our dreams!

. . . . .

It is thus only I can hear again the spirit voice of thy Cremona, dead master, but not at St. James's Hall; no longer in the crowded haunts of men as once. Its body only is there: its soul was the very soul of the master who has passed to where the chiming is "after the chiming of the eternal spheres."

26. SIVORI, CHATTERTON.

I heard other great players: SIVORI, delicate, refined, with a perfect command of his instrument—a pupil of PAGANINI's, playing all his pieces, and probably no more like him than a Roman candle is like a meteor; CHATTERTON on the harp, a thankless instrument, without variety and never in tune, whose depths are quickly sounded—an *arpeggio*, a few *harmonics*, a few full glorious

chords, an ethereal whispering, and *da capo*! Piatti on the violoncello—a truly disembodied violoncello—so pure and free from catgut and rosin came the sound; and pianists innumerable in later days. But if, looking back and up to the present hour, I am asked to name off-hand the greatest players—the very greatest I have heard—I say at once Ernst, Liszt, Rubinstein.

II.

BRIGHTON AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

1850-1856.

From such heights I am loth to return to my own insignificant doings, but they happen to supply me with the framework for my present meditations: they are, in fact, the pegs on which I have chosen to hang my thoughts. I was at a complete standstill: I sorely needed instruction. I went to the seaside for my health. One day, in the morning, I entered the concert room of the town hall at Margate. It was empty, but on a platform at the farther end, half a dozen musicians were rehearsing. One sat up at a front desk and seemed to be leading on the violin. As they paused, I walked straight up to him. I was about twelve then.

27. MY SECOND MASTER.

"Please, sir," I began rather nervously, "do you teach the violin?"

He looked round rather surprised, but in another moment he smiled kindly, and said:

"Why, yes—at least," he added, "that depends. Do you mean you want to learn?"

"That's it," I said, "I have learned a little. Will you teach me?"

"Wait a bit. I must finish here first, and then I'll come down to you. Can you wait?" he added, cheerily.

I had been terribly nervous when I began to ask him, but now I felt my heart beating with joy.

"Oh yes," I said, "I can wait!" and I waited and heard them play, and watched every motion of one whom I already looked upon as my master.

And he became my master—my first *real* master. Good, patient MR. DEVONPORT! I took to him, and he took to me at once. He got me to unlearn all my slovenly ways, taught me how to hold my fiddle and how to finger and how to bow. It seems I did everything wrong. He used to write out KREUTZER'S early exercises, over his breakfast, and bring them to me all blotted, in pen and ink, and actually got into disgrace, so he said, with his landlady, for inking the table-cloth! That seemed to me heroic; but who would not have mastered the crabbed bowing, the ups and downs and staccatos, and slur two and bow one, and slur three and bow one, and slur two and two, after that! And I did my best,

though not to his satisfaction; but he never measured his time with me, and he had an indefinitely sweet way with him which won me greatly, and made me love my violin—a five-pound VUILHAUME copy of STRADIVARIUS, crude in tone —more than ever.

When I left the sea, I lost my master. I never saw him again. If he is alive now, and these lines should chance to meet his eye, I will join hands with him across the years. Why should he not be alive? HULLAH and SAINTON and PIATTI and M^me^ DOLBY and M^me^ LIND-GOLDSCHMIDT, and I know not how many more of his contemporaries, and my elders, are alive. Only there was a sadness and delicacy about that pale diaphanous face, its hectic flush, its light hair, and slight fringe of moustache; I can remember it so well; and I must own, too, there was a little cough, which makes me fear that DEVONPORT was not destined to live long. Someone remarked it at the time, but I thought nothing of it then.

28.
MY THIRD MASTER.

I made a great stride under DEVONPORT, and my next master, whom I disliked exceedingly, was a young Pole, LAPINSKI, who could not speak a word of English. Our lessons were very dull. He taught me little, but he taught me something—the *art of making my fingers ache*—the great art, according to JOACHIM. My time with him was pure drudgery, unrelieved by a single glow of pleasure, or gleam of recreation; he was a dogged and hard task-master, knew exactly what he meant,

and was utterly indifferent to the likes and dislikes of his pupil—the very opposite to DEVONPORT, whom in six weeks I got positively to love. In music, you learn more in a week from a sympathetic teacher, or at least from someone who is so to you, than from another, however excellent, in a month. You will make no progress if he can give you no impulse.

29. THE MYSTERY OF TEACHING.

What a mystery lies in that word "teaching"! One will constrain you irresistibly, and another shall not be able to persuade you. One will kindle you with an ambition that aspires to what the day before seemed inaccessible heights, whilst another will labour in vain to stir your sluggish mood to cope with the smallest obstacle. The reciprocal relation is too often forgotten. It is assumed that any good master or mistress will suit any willing pupil. Not at all—any more than A can mesmerise B, who goes into a trance immediately on the appearance of C. All personal relations, and teaching relations are intensely personal, have to do with subtle conditions—unexplored—but inexorable and instantly perceived. The soul puts out, as it were, its invisible antennæ, knowing the soul that is kindred to itself. I do *not* want to be told whether you can teach me anything. I *know* you cannot. I will not learn from you what I *must* learn from another; what he will be bound to teach me. All you may have to say may be good and true, but it is a little impertinent and out of place. You spoil the truth. You mar the beauty

I will not hear these things from you; you spoil nature; you wither art; you are not for me, and I am not for you—"Let us go hence, my songs—she will not hear."

My next master was OURY. I fell in with him at Brighton when I was about sixteen. He had travelled with PAGANINI and was a consummate violinist himself. He was a short, angry-looking, stoutly-built little man. Genial with those who were sympathetic to him, and sharp, savage, and sarcastic with others—he made many enemies, and was unscrupulous in his language. I found he had been unlucky, and I hardly wonder at it; for a man more uncertain, unstable, and capricious in temper I never met—but he was an exquisite player; his fingers were thick and plump, his hand was fat and short, not unlike that of poor JAELL, the late pianist. How he could stop his intervals in tune and execute passages of exceeding delicacy with such hands was a mystery to me; but JAELL did things even more amazing with his—stretching the most impossible intervals, and bowling his fat hands up and down the key-board like a couple of galvanised balls.

30. MY LAST MASTER, OURY.

I was at this time about sixteen and a member of the Brighton Symphony Society. We played the symphonies of the old masters to not very critical audiences in the Pavilion, and I have also played in the Brighton Town Hall. It was at these meetings I first fell in with OURY.

I noticed a little group in the ante-room on one of the

rehearsal nights; they were chattering round a thickset crotchety-looking little man and trying to persuade him to do something. He held his fiddle, but would not easily yield to their entreaties. They were asking him to play. At last he raised his Cremona to his chin and began to improvise. What fancy and delicacy and execution! what refinement! His peculiar gift lay not only in a full round tone, but in the musical "embroideries"—the long flourishes, the torrents of multitudinous notes ranging all over the instrument. I can liken those astonishing violin passages to nothing but the elaborate embroidery of little notes which in CHOPIN's music are spangled in tiny type all round the subject, which is in large type. When OURY was in a good humour he would gratify us in this way, and then stop abruptly, and nothing after that would induce him to play another note. He had the fine large style of the DE BERIOT school, combined with a dash of the brilliant and romantic PAGANINI, and the most exquisite taste of his own. In those days DE BERIOT's music reigned supreme in the concert-room until the appearance of PAGANINI. It had not yet gone out of fashion, and I remember hearing OURY*

* "Do we not remember him," writes a correspondent in August 1883, "more than a quarter of a century ago in Brighton, when his name was foremost on the programme of every public musical entertainment; and his wife, Madame de Belleville Oury, the most artistic pianoforte performer of her day. But time has at length played out poor old Oury, his latter days were passed in peace at Norwich, and there it was, as his nephew, Mr. Crook, informed me, he shifted his mortal coil a fortnight since at the ripe age of 83."

play Dr Beriot's showy first concerto with a full orchestra, at the Pavilion, in a way which reminded me of some conqueror traversing a battle-field; the enthusiasm he aroused was quite remarkable, in that languid and ignorant crowd of loitering triflers. He certainly brought the house down. He was a great player, though past his prime, and he knew how to score point after point without ever sacrificing his musical honour by stooping to clap-trap.

From Oury I received, between the ages of fifteen and seventeen, my last definite violin instruction. After that I studied for myself and heard assiduously the best players, but I was never taught anything. Oury had been trained himself in the old and new schools of Rode, Baillot, and De Beriot, and only grafted on the sensational discoveries, methods, and tricks of Paganini, Ernst, and Sivori. But he was artist enough to absorb without corruption and appropriate without mimicry. He always treated me with a semi-humorous, though kindly, indulgence. He was extremely impatient, and got quite bitter and angry with my ways; stormed at my self-will; said I had such a terrible second finger that he believed the devil was in it. I had a habit of playing whole tunes with my second finger on the fourth string. It seemed more muscular than the rest, and from his point of view quite upset the equilibrium of the hand. He had a habit of sighing deeply over the lessons.

"You should have been in the profession. What's the

use of teaching you? Bah! you will never do anything. I shall teach you no more."

Then he would listen, as I played some bravura passage in my own way, half-amused, half-surprised, half-satirical; my method was clearly wrong, but how had I got through the passage at all? Then taking the violin from me he would play it himself, without explanation, and then play on and say:

"Listen to me; that is your best lesson, you rascal! I believe you never practice at all. Nature has given you too much facility. Your playing will never be worth anything. You do not deserve the gifts God has given you."

At times poor OURY took quite a serious and desponding view of me. He would sit long over his hour, playing away and playing to me, telling me stories about PAGANINI's loosening the horsehair of his bow and passing the whole violin between the stick and the horsehair, thus allowing the loosened horsehair to scrape all four strings together, and producing the effect of a quartet. He described the great magician's playing of harmonic passages, and showed me how it was done, and told me how the fiddlers when PAGANINI played sat open-mouthed, unable to make out how he got at all his consecutive harmonics.

In his lighter moods he taught me the farm-yard on the violin; how to make the donkey bray, the hen chuckle, the cuckoo sing, the cow moo. He taught me PAGANINI's "Carnaval de Venise" variations; some of them—especially

the canary variation—so absurdly easy to any fingers at home on the violin, yet apparently so miraculous to the uninitiated. But it remained his bitterest reflection that amateur I was, and amateur I was destined to be; otherwise, I believe, I should have been a pupil after his heart, for he spent hour after hour with me, and never seemed to reckon his time or his toil by money.

31. OURY'S METHOD.

If I did not acquire the right method, it was not OURY's fault. He taught me how to hold the violin; to spread my fingers instead of crumpling up those I was not using; to bow without sawing round my shoulder.

"In position," he used often to say, "nothing is right unless all is right. Hold your wrist right, the bow must go right; hold your fiddle well up, or you cannot get the tone."

Above all, he taught me how to *whip* instead of *scraping* the sound out. This springing, elastic bowing he contrasted with the grinding of badly-taught fiddlers, who checked the vibration. Some violinists of repute have been "grinders," but I could never bear to listen to them. OURY poisoned me early against the grinders, and all short of the men of perfect method. He instilled into me principles rather than rules. I caught from him what I was to do, and how I was to do it. He did not lecture at me like some masters; he took the violin out of my hands without speaking, or with merely

an impatient expletive, of which, I regret to say, he was rather too free, and played the passage for me. His explanations I might have forgotten, this I could never forget, and I could tell at once whether what I did sounded like what he did.

OURY taught me the secret of *cantabile* playing on the violin—how to treat a simple melody with rare phrasing, until it was transfigured by the mood of the player. He taught me RODE'S Air in G—that beautiful melody which has been, with its well-known variations, the *pièce de résistance* of so many generations of violinists and soprani. I was drilled in every note, the bowing was rigidly fixed for me, the whole piece was marked, bar by bar, with *slur, p* and *f, rall* and *crescendo.* I was not allowed to depart a hair's breath from rule. When I could do this easily and accurately, OURY surprised me one day by saying,

"Now you can play it as you like, you need not attend to a single mark!"

"How so?" I said.

"Don't you see," he said, "the marks don't signify: that is only one way of playing it. If you've got any music in you, you can play it in a dozen other ways. Now, I will make it equally good," and he took the violin and played it through, reversing as nearly as possible all the *p's* and *f's*, "bowing" the slur and slurring the "bow," and it sounded just as well. I never forgot that lesson. At other times OURY was most punctilious about what he called "correct"

bowing. He complained of my habit of beginning a *forte* "attaque" with an *up* bow—an unusual perversity, I admit—but I replied, in my conceit, I had observed RICHARD BLAGROVE do the same thing. OURY said, as sharply as wisely, "When you play like BLAGROVE, you may do it too; until then, oblige me, sir, by minding your up and down bow, or I cease to be your violin tutor."

32. THE BRIGHTON SYMPHONY SOCIETY.

I had a good deal of orchestral practice at Brighton The Symphony Society that met at the Pavilion, Brighton, was never very strong, but we blazed away at the principle overtures, "Der Freyschütz," "Masaniello," "Figaro," "Dame Blanche," "Cheval de Bronze"; we shuffled through HAYDN's symphonies, and scrambled over MOZART's "Jupiter" and BEETHOVEN's 8th, very much to our own satisfaction. I remember the disgust of OURY when an enterprising amateur let off a pistol behind the platform to reinforce the sudden explosion on the drum in the Surprise movement. I suppose JULLIEN's "British Army Quadrilles" had put it into his head.

33. OURY ON JULLIEN.

OURY detested JULLIEN—why, I could never make out. I was fond of maintaining that JULLIEN had done much for music in England, introduced classical works, was a famous conductor, and good composer of light music himself.

"He knows nothing, I tell you; he is an ignorant, affected *charlatan*. He cannot write down his own compositions, he borrows his subjects, he steals his treatment, and he bribes a man to lick it into shape for him. MELLON, his leader, is a good musician; but don't talk to me of JULLIEN. You admire the way his band plays the overture to the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' but those men learnt it under MENDELSSOHN'S *bâton*! MENDELSSOHN took an infinity of trouble with those very men. They knew the music by heart before JULLIEN touched it, and they played away without even looking at him."

34. SAINTON ON MENDELSSOHN AND BEETHOVEN.

I used about this time to hear some very good quartet-playing at CAPTAIN NEWBERRY'S, Brunswick Square. The captain must have been nearly seventy about that time. He was excessively good-humoured, but belonged to the old school of HAYDN and MOZART. BEETHOVEN'S earlier quartets were admitted, but the RAZAMOUSKY'S were declared to be outside the pale, and the captain annoyed me extremely by speaking in a very slighting way of MENDELSSOHN. "Rides his subjects to death," he used to say; "tears 'em all to pieces," "goes thin, very thin." Those were the days when I felt quite sure that no one ever had or ever would write such inspired music as MENDELSSOHN. I think M. SAINTON'S calm verdict, not long afterwards, irritated me still more. I said to him with ill-advised confidence: "I had sooner

hear MENDELSSOHN's canzonet or the quintet than any of BEETHOVEN's chamber music."

"Vous avez cependant tort," said the great artist, "there is no comparison to be made. You cannot speak of the two together. MENDELSSOHN, c'était un jeune homme d'un énorme talent; mais BEETHOVEN—oh! c'est autre chose!"

35. MY VIOLIN.

The captain had some fine violins; one I specially coveted; he held it to be a genuine STRADIVARIUS; it was labelled 1712; quite in the finest period, and of the grand pattern—the back a magnificently ribbed slice of maple in one piece; the front hardly so fine; the head strong, though not so fine as I have seen—more like a BERGONZI—but the fiddle itself could never be mistaken for a BERGONZI. It had a tone like a trumpet on the fourth string; the third was full, but the second puzzled me for years—it being weak by comparison—but the violin was petulant, and after having it in my possession for thirty years, I know what to do with it if I could ever again take the time and trouble to bring it into perfect order and keep it so, as it was once my pride to do.

On CAPTAIN NEWBERRY'S death that fiddle was sent me by his widow, who did not survive him long. She said she believed it was his wish.

This violin was my faithful companion for years. I now look at it under a glass case occasionally, where it lies

unstrung from one end of the year to the other. It belonged to the captain's uncle; he had set his heart on it, and having a very fine pair of carriage horses, for which he had given £180, he one day made them over to his uncle and obtained the Strad in exchange. This was the last price paid for my violin, some fifty years ago. It came into the hands of NEWBERRY's relative early in the present century—how, I know not. Many years ago I took this fiddle down to Bath and played it a good deal there in a band conducted by the well-known MR. SALMON. I found he recognised it immediately. I there made acquaintance with the score of MENDELSSOHN's "Athalie" playing it in the orchestra. I studied the Scotch and Italian symphonies in the same way.

No amateur should omit an opportunity of orchestral or chorus work. In this way you get a more living acquain-

36. CHARM OF ORCHESTRAL PLAYING.

tance with the internal structure of the great master-pieces than in any other. I first made acquaintance with the "Elijah" and "St. Paul" in this way. What writing for the violin there is in the chorus parts! what telling passages are those in "Be not afraid," where the first violins lift the phrases, rise after rise, until the shrill climax is reached and the aspiring passage is closed with a long drawn-out *ff*.

When the violins pealed louder and louder, mounting upwards, it was always a delight to me to hear my own

powerful first string thrilling through all the others. The conductor used to know this passage and the way in which it told on my Strad, and invariably gave me a knowing nod as he heard my violin at the first fiddle-desk through all the others. I may add that, as a rule, when any particular violin in a band is heard above the rest, it usually belongs to a bungler; but there are passages where the leading violins have *carte blanche* to play up, and then, if you can, you may be allowed to sing through the rest; and, if this be anywhere allowable, it is of course so at the first violin desk.

Most boys find it difficult to keep up their music at school; with me it was the reverse; my ill health was the making of my music. I had been an invalid on and off up to the age of seventeen. I remember Sir Benjamin Brodie, the great doctor, a thin, wizen, little old man, coming and staring at me, about the year 1848, at No. 2, Spanish Place, my grandfather's house in London. I was then suffering from hip disease. They asked him whether I should be taken to Brighton. He mumbled something to himself and turned away to speak with my father aside. I merely noticed an expression of great pain and anxiety on my father's face as he listened. Afterwards I knew the great doctor had said it did not matter where I went, for in any case I could not live. He thought it was a question of weeks. He little knew how

37. FRESHWATER, ISLE OF WIGHT

much it would take to kill me. People are born long-lived. It runs in families. It has little to do with health and disease. If you are long-lived you will weather disease, and if you are short-lived you will drop suddenly in full health, or be blown out like a candle, with a whiff of fever or bronchitis. My grandfather died Rector of Aldwinkle, when past eighty; my father having been given over at thirty-two by his doctors, as I was condemned by Sir Benjamin Brodie at eleven, became Rector of Slaugham, Sussex, at seventy-two, and was made a Canon and Prebendary of Chichester Cathedral when hard upon eighty. He picked up his general health about sixty. I was more fortunate, I picked up mine before thirty. Sir Benjamin pocketed his fee and departed. In great perplexity what to do, we cast lots; I think it was at my suggestion. The lot came out in favour of Brighton. To Brighton I was taken, apparently in a dying state, but at my grandmother's house in Brunswick Square I began rapidly to amend.

My violin was my solace, when I got strong enough to hold it again. The time that should have been spent upon mathematics, Latin, and Greek, was spent in my case upon French, German, and music—I may add novels, for between the ages of twelve and sixteen I read all Bulwer, Walter Scott, G. P. R. James, Fenimore Cooper, and, in certain visits to Bath and Bognor, I took care to exhaust the ancient stores of fiction which I found secreted in the antiquated lending libraries of those privileged resorts.

When I was sixteen it became evident that I was not going to die; my health was still feeble, and my general education defective. I was sent to an excellent tutor at the Isle of Wight, the Rev. John Bicknell, now Incumbent of St. Saviour's, Highbury. That good man never overcame my dislike to mathematics, but he got me on in Latin, and he was kind enough to tolerate my violin.

38. SCHOOL AT FRESHWATER.

I could no longer play cricket, or climb trees, the chief delights of my earlier days—nor could I take long walks with the boys. I was left entirely alone in play hours—*i.e.* almost every afternoon. I think I was perfectly happy by myself. Freshwater, Isle of Wight, in 1853, was very different from Freshwater in 1883. There were no forts built then, no tourists, hardly a lodging house, and only a few cottages. There was the Rector, a Rev. Mr. Isaacson, learned, dogmatic, and of the old high and dry school in the pulpit; there were two or three families who owned between them most of that part of the island — the Hammonds, the Croziers, and the Cottons. There was a rotten steamer called the "Solent" which plied between the dirty little town of Yarmouth and the mainland—and when it crossed we got letters; and when it did not cross we went without. And there was such utter solitude for me, in the silent lanes, the summer woodlands, and by the lovely sea-shore, that—well—I had plenty of time to think. I sat on stiles and thought; I tasted almost every kind of

berry and herb that grew in the hedges. I watched the butterflies and the teeming insect life, and I would lie down in the woody recesses and leafy coverts like one dead, until the birds, the rabbits, and even the weasels and stoats came close enough for me to see their exquisitely clean soft fur, bright eyes, or radiant plumage. I have surprised a wild hawk on her nest in the gorse, and she has never moved.

About this time I wrote quantities of the most dismal poetry, which appeared at intervals in the columns of the Brighton papers. It was naturally a mixture of BRYANT and LONGFELLOW, later on it became a jumble of TENNYSON and BROWNING—but such matters belong more to literature than to music.

OURY had already begun to direct my violin studies. I had ample time at school in the Isle of Wight for practising, and I practised steadily, nearly every day. I had a faculty for practising. I knew what to do, and I did it. I always remembered what JOACHIM had said about tiring out the hand; and with some abominable torture passages, invented for me by that morose Pole, LAPINSKI, I took a vicious pleasure in making my fingers ache, and an intense delight in discovering the magical effects of the torture upon my execution.

I put my chief trust in KREUTZER'S exercises—admirable in invention and most attractive as musical studies—the

more difficult ones in chords being little violin solos in themselves. I perfected myself in certain solos at this time. I had no one to play my accompaniments, and no one cared to hear me play at school, except some of the boys who liked to hear me imitate the donkey and give the farm-yard entertainment—including the groans of a chronic invalid and a great fight of cats on the roof—which never failed to be greeted with rapturous applause.

39. MY SOLOS.

My great solos were RODE's air in G, DE BERIOT's "First Concerto," and several of his "Airs variés"; ERNST's "Carnaval de Venise," his Elégie, and some occasional "Morceaux" which I had heard him play shockingly out of tune at Brighton.

Then there was the "Cuckoo Solo"—one of the pieces played by the little girl of six who so fascinated me at Norwood. Besides these, I had certain mixtures of my own —a mixture of Italian airs with some prodigious cadenzas and a *bravura* passage at the end in the worst possible taste, which always brought down the house. Then I invented a final variation to the "Carnaval de Venise," more preposterous than any of the PAGANINI or ERNST series. This variation was so difficult that I could never really play it; but my attempts to scramble through it being always vociferously applauded, I habitually inflicted it upon undiscriminating audiences—alas! the commonest kind of musical audiences in this country—though I am thankful to say this is far

less true now, and in London, than it was in the days of my boyhood.

40. AT FARRINGFORD.

I said no one cared to hear me play at Freshwater. Yes, some people did. One autumn whilst I was at Freshwater, an old house, Farringford, with a rambling garden at the back of the downs, was let to Baron A.—an eminent light of the Bench—and his charming family. I forget how they discovered my existence, but I dare say Lady A. and the young ladies found the place rather dull, and they were not the people to neglect their opportunities.

I received an invitation to dinner; my violin was also asked. I did not reply like SIVORI when similarly invited to bring his violin with him: "Merci! mon violon ne dîne pas!" I saw to my strings and screws, put together my solos, and went.

Lady A., with her beautiful grey hair, her sweet and dignified smile, and a soul full of musical sensibility, received me with the most flattering cordiality. The eldest young lady, now the Marchioness of S——, I remember seeing once or twice only at Farringford. Table-turning was all the fashion then. The Farringford circle was, like most others, divided on the question, but the old Baron was a sceptic.

We all sat round a heavy dining-table one day, and the thing certainly began to go round, and was only arrested in

its course through a large bow window by the hurried breaking up of the circle. I didn't turn any more tables at Farringford, but Lady A. used to beg me to come as often as I could and play, and I think I went there on an average twice a week and enjoyed myself immensely. The Farringford music was not strong, as to pianoforte playing at least; but the youngest daughter, Miss M., little more than a child, had a sweet voice, and seemed to me altogether an angelic being, and between them they managed to get through some of my easier accompaniments. OURY had given me an air of MAYERSEDER'S, to which he had added a pathetic little closing cadence of his own. He had taught me to play it with due expression, and this air Lady A. could never hear often enough. The little cadence in sliding sixths at the end, she said, always made her feel inclined to scream. One night Miss M. induced her mother to sing "Auld Robin Gray." "You know, mamma," she said, "everyone used to cry when you sang 'Auld Robin Gray.'" "Ah! my dear," said the old lady—"that was long ago. I can't sing now, I 'm an old woman"; but she did sing, and with a pathetic simple grace and feeling which I can remember vividly even now; and as I listened I easily perceived where Miss M. had got her sweet soprano voice from.

Soon after the A.'s left Farringford it was taken by the Poet Laureate. At that time I was rapidly outgrowing

LONGFELLOW, and my enthusiasm for MR. TENNYSON amounted to a mania: he was to me in poetry what MENDELSSOHN was in music. I can now place him. I can now see how great he is. I can now understand his relation to other poets. Then I could not. He confused and dazzled me. He took possession of my imagination. He taught me to see and to feel for the first time the heights and depths of life; to discern dimly what I could then have had little knowledge of—"The world with all its lights and shadows, all the wealth and all the woe." In fact, TENNYSON was then doing for the rising generation of that age what BYRON and SHELLEY, WORDSWORTH and COLERIDGE, had done for theirs, only he united in himself more representative qualities than any one of the poets who preceded him, and in this respect he seems to me still a greater poet, and certainly as subtle a thinker as any one of them, WORDSWORTH and COLERIDGE not excepted.

41. TENNYSON.

All this is an after-thought. Then I did not analyse or compare. The Brighton papers received elaborate prose effusions from my pen upon the subject, at the time, of a frothy and rhetorical character. Sometimes I look at them in my old scrap-books, and marvel at the bombast, inflation, and prodigious inanity of the matter and the style. No doubt I was not quite right in my head about TENNYSON, and this accounts for my wending my steps towards Farringford one autumn afternoon, soon after he had come there.

The poet never went to church, so the poet could never be seen. The man who, in the "In Memoriam," had recently re-formulated the religion of the nineteenth century, might, one would have thought, be excused the dismal routine that went on at the parish church, and the patristic theology doled out by the worthy rector. But no! Mr. Tennyson's soul was freely despaired of in the neighbourhood, and many of the people about Freshwater would have been "very faithful" with him if they could only have got at him—but they could not get at him. Under these circumstances I got at him.

I suppose the continued play of one idea upon my brain was too much for me. To live so close to the man who filled the whole of my poetic and imaginative horizon without ever seeing him, was more than I could bear. I walked over the neglected grass-grown gravel between the tall trees yellowing in the autumn, and up to the glass-pannelled doors, as bold as fate.

42. MY VISIT TO TENNYSON IN 1854.

"Mr. Tennyson," said the maid, "saw no one." I was aware of that. Was Mrs. Tennyson at home? Perhaps she would see me? The servant looked dubious. I was a shabby-looking student, sure enough, but there was something about me which could not be said nay! I evidently meant to get in, and in I got.

In another moment I found myself in the drawing-room lately tenanted by the Baron and Lady A.

There was the arm-chair where lady A. had sat reclining, with her head resting on a little cushion, as she sang "Auld Robin Gray."

There was the piano beside which Miss M. stood and sang very shyly and under protest in her simple white muslin dress and a rose in her hair; there—but the door opened, and a quiet, gentle lady appeared, and bowed silently to me. I had to begin then.

I had no excuse to make, and so I offered no apology. I had called desiring to see Mr. Tennyson, that was all.

The lady looked surprised, and sat down by a little work-table with a little work-basket on it. She asked me very kindly to sit down too. So I sat down. What next? Now I got clumsy with a vengeance. All my wits forsook me. I looked out at the tangled garden—everything was allowed to grow wild. I had to say something. I looked at the kind lady, who had already taken up her work and begun plying her needle. I said that my admiration for Mr. Tennyson's poems was so great that, as I was living in the neighbourhood, I had called with an earnest desire to see him. I then began to repeat that I considered his poems so exquisite that—a smile was on the kind lady's face as she listened for the thousand and first time to such large and general praises of the Laureate's genius. But the smile somehow paralysed me. She evidently considered me a harmless lunatic, not an impertinent intruder.

This was fortunate, for had I been summarily shown the

door I should not have been surprised. I should not have gone, for I was desperate and prepared to show fight, and be kicked out, if needful, by the Laureate alone; but the Fates were propitious.

Said MRS. TENNYSON, "My husband is always very busy, and I do not at all think it likely he can see you."

"Do you think he would if you ask him?" I stammered out.

Said MRS. TENNYSON, a little taken aback, "I don't know."

"Then," said I, pursuing my advantage with, if any calm at all, the calmness of a calm despair, "would you object to asking him to see me, if only for an instant?"

What passed in that indulgent lady's mind I shall never know; the uppermost thought was probably not flattering to me, and her chief desire was, no doubt, to get rid of me. "He won't go till he has seen my husband—he ought never to have got in; but as he is here, I'll manage it and have done with him"; or she might have reflected thus: "The poor fellow is not right in his head; it would be a charity to meet him half-way, and not much trouble."

At any rate at this juncture MRS. TENNYSON rose and left the room. She was gone about four minutes by the clock. It seemed to me four hours. What I went through in those four minutes no words can utter. "Will he come? I almost hope he won't. *If* he won't come, I shall have done all I could to see him, without experiencing a shock to

which my nervous system is quite unequal." At that moment, indeed, I was trembling with excitement from top to toe. I thought I would try and recollect some of his own sublime verse, it might steady me a little. I knew volumes of it by heart—couldn't recollect a line anywhere, except—

> Wrinkled ostler grim and thin,
> Here is custom come your way,
> Take my brute and lead him in,
> Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

I believe I was muttering this mechanically when I heard a man's voice close outside the door.

"Who is it? Is it an impostor?"

Ah, verily, the word smote me to the heart. What right had I to be there? Conscience said, "Thou art the man!" I would have willingly disappeared into my boots, like the genius in the fairy tale. "O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt"; but I remained palpable and motionless—glued to the spot.

In another moment the door opened. The man whose voice I had heard—in other words, Mr. Tennyson—entered.

He was not in Court-dress; he had not got a laurel wreath on his head, nor a lily in his hand—not even a harp.

It was in the days when he shaved. I have two portraits of him without a beard. I believe they are very rare now.

I thought it would be inappropriate to prostrate myself

so I remained standing and stupefied. He advanced towards me and shook hands without cordiality. Why should he be cordial? I began desperately to say that I had the greatest admiration for his poetry; that I could not bear to leave the island without seeing him. He soon stopped me, and taking a card of CAPTAIN CROZIER'S which lay on the table, asked me if I knew him. I said I did, and described his house and grounds in the neighbourhood of Freshwater.

I have no recollection of anything else, but I believe some allusion was made to Baron A——, when the poet observed abruptly, "Now I must go; good-bye!" and he went. And that was all I saw of MR. TENNYSON for nearly thirty years. The next time I set eyes on him was one Sunday morning, about twenty-eight years later. He came up the side aisle of my church, St. James, Westmoreland Street, Marylebone, and, with his son HALLAM, sat near the pulpit, almost in the very spot that had been pointed out to me when I was appointed incumbent as the pew occupied by HALLAM the historian and his son ARTHUR—the ARTHUR of the "In Memoriam."

43. MRS. TENNYSON.

But I have not quite done with the interview at Freshwater. As the poet retired, MRS. TENNYSON re-entered and sat down again at her work-table. To her surprise, no doubt, I also sat down. The fact is, I had crossed the Rubicon, and was now in a state of considerable elation and perfectly reckless. I thanked

her effusively for the privilege I had had—I believe I made several tender and irrelevant inquiries after the poet's health, and wound up with earnestly requesting her to give me a bit of his handwriting.

This was perhaps going a little too far—but I had now nothing to lose—no character for sanity, or prudence, or propriety; so I went in steadily for some of the poet's handwriting.

The forbearing lady pointed out that she treasured it so much herself that she never gave it away. This would not do. I said I should treasure it to my dying day, any little scrap—by which I suppose I meant that I did not require the whole manuscript of "Maud," which the poet was then writing, and which is full of Freshwater scenery. I might be induced to leave the house with something short of that.

With infinite charity and without a sign of irritation she at last drew from her work-basket an envelope in MR. TENNYSON'S handwriting, directed to herself, and gave it to me.

It was not his signature, but it contained his name.

Then, and then only, I rose. I had *veni*, I had *vidi*, I had *vici*. I returned to my school, and at tea-time related to my tutor with some little pride and self-conceit the nature of my exploit that afternoon. He administered to me a well-merited rebuke, which, as it came after my indiscretion, and in no way interfered with my long-coveted joy, I took patiently enough and with all meekness.

There is a strange link between these two old memories of Farringford, Isle of Wight. I may call it the link of a common oblivion. Years afterwards I tried to recall to Lady A., who frequented my church in her later days, the, to me, delicious evenings I had spent with her and her daughters at Farringford. She had not the slightest recollection of ever having received me there, or sung to me there, or heard me play. She reintroduced me to her eldest daughter, the Marchioness of S., then Viscountess C., one night at her house in Portland Place, who was probably not aware of ever having seen me before, although I remembered her well at Farringford. Years afterwards I tried to recall to Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson that preposterous visit of mine, which I have detailed, but neither of them could recall it in the slightest degree.

44. THE LINK OF OBLIVION.

So strange is it that events which upon some of the actors leave such an indelible impression pass entirely away from the memories of the others—and what a sermon might be preached on that text! The very same scene in which you and I are the only ones concerned—is nothing to you, everything to me.

O ye tidal years that roll over us all—be kind! Wash out the memory of our pain and the dark blots of sin and grief, but leave, oh leave us bright, the burnished gold of joy, and the rainbow colours of our youth!

. . . . .

I have been a martyr to bad accompanyists. All young ladies think they can accompany themselves—so why not you or any other man? The truth is that very few ladies can accompany at all. If they sing they will probably try, in the absence of any musical friend, to make shift with a few chords in order that the assembly may not be deprived of a song. But also if they sing they will probably have forgotten the little they once knew about pianoforte playing. To accompany yourself properly you must do it with ease and accuracy: nothing is so charming and nothing is so rare.

45. ACCOMPANYISTS.

Singing ladies, especially amateurs, are pitiably unscrupulous, and moderately unconscious of the wild effect produced by that fitful and inaccurate dabbling with the keyboard which they palm off upon their listeners as an accompaniment. Now and then a Scotch ballad may survive such treatment—a Scotch ballad seems always grateful for any accompaniment at all—but to attempt GOUNOD or SCHUBERT in this style is conduct indicative of a weak intellect and a feeble conscience.

To accompany well you must not only be a good musician but you must be mesmeric, sympathetic, intuitive. You must know what I want before I tell you, you must feel which way my spirit sets, for the motions of the soul are swift as an angel's flight. I cannot pause in those quick and subtle transitions of emotion, fancy, passion, to tell you a secret; if it is not yours already, you are unworthy of

it. What! when I had played three bars thus, you could not guess that I should hurry the fourth and droop with a melodious sigh upon the fifth! You dared to strike in at the end of a note which my intention would have stretched out into at least another semibreve! You are untrue to the rhythm of my soul. Get up from the piano, my conceited, self-satisfied young lady. Your finishing lessons in music can do nothing for you. Your case is hopeless. You have not enough music in you to know that you are a failure.

But you may be even a good musician and yet not be able to accompany. If you cannot, be passive for a while. You are of no use to me. You want to take the initiative —you must always be creating, you think you know best, you impose your "reading" upon me. What! you will do this when I am the soloist or the singer! You are professional—'tis the vice of professionals—and I am but an amateur. No matter; if I know not best, that is my affair; for better for worse you have to follow me, or you will mar me. The art of true accompanying lies in a willing self-immolation. An excess of sensibility, but a passive excess. Yet must your collaboration be strong. You must not desert me or fail me in the moment of my need or expectancy. You must cover me with thunder, you must buoy me up as a barque is buoyed up on the bosom of a great flood. You must be still anon and wait, dream with my spirit, as the winds that droop fitfully when

the sea grows calm and the white sails flap idly, sighing for the breeze. I sleep, but my heart waketh! Every mood of mine must be thine as soon as it is mine, and when all is finished my soul shall bless thee, and thou, too, shalt feel a deep content.

In my vacations at Brighton I suffered musically many things at the hands of many accompanyists, chiefly young ladies. I was fortunate in playing habitually with my elder sister, and later on with my younger sister, both of whom were thoroughly familiar with my style; but I sometimes fell among the Philistine women at evening parties and musical circles. In those days musical taste at Brighton was not high. No one thought of listening to mere pianoforte playing. There were a few good singers to whom people did attend. I remember Mrs. Weldon, then a mere girl, Miss Treherne, and possesssed of considerable personal attractions. She was a charming drawing-room singer, and was always listened to with respect in those days.

46. MUSIC AT BRIGHTON IN 1856.

A delicious little song, "Birds in the Branches," of German origin, made a great impression on me when sung by a Miss Chapman—a very handsome, pale, refined-looking girl—daughter of Mr. Chapman of the Overend and Gurney Bank. They lived in Brunswick Square, and I met this young lady on an average twice a week at musical parties, and late and early she sang very deliciously and dreamily,

"Birds in the Branches." The poor girl married a fashionable baronet in the neighbourhood, and died shortly afterwards.

Miss Harriett Young, the author of several popular songs, was a brilliant amateur pianist. Her singing—she had a light high soprano—was even more esteemed; people were not musical enough to understand the merit of her playing. I remember hearing her in the Mendelssohn D minor trio at Professor D'Alquen's one night, and being much overcome by my feelings at the wild and magnificent close, I turned to a musician who was standing close to me and exclaimed, "'Tis like going up to heaven by a whirlwind!" He merely stared.

D'Alquen used to play at Captain Newberry's. He got one of his violins when the Captain died. He did a great deal for music in Brighton. He was an admirable musician, an excellent teacher, and a German artist of the solid Moscheles type. I was one night at his house when a telegram arrived to say that Sebastopol had at last fallen, and D'Alquen sat down to the piano and executed a rather disjointed but murderous improvisation inspired by the siege and ultimate surrender of that redoubtable fortress; the great guns in the bass were continuous and the firing was very heavy. Before midnight another telegram arrived to say that it was all a mistake, and Sebastopol had not fallen. Of course we took no notice, and indeed were rather anxious to conceal the awkward and

malaprop intelligence from the worthy Professor. We all felt it was high time Sebastopol did fall, and some time afterwards it fell, and D'Alquen's piano, which had suffered considerably from the cannonade by anticipation, had at last something to show for it.

In those days the musical culture of Brighton was chiefly managed by Herr Kühe, still an ornament of the Brighton season, Mons. de Paris, and Signor Li Calsi, sometime conductor of the Italian Opera, and, let me add, an admirable musician, pianist, and, above all, accompanyist. He accompanied me occasionally on the piano, and also in another capacity, for we travelled together as far as Genoa. I was on my way to Naples. Li Calsi had started with rifle and sword to join Garibaldi, like many other Italian patriots. He got to Sicily, and got no farther. He was a Sicilian by birth. He revisited his friends, and parted with his rifle.

47. PLAYING AT PARTIES.

After Garibaldi's capture of Naples there was really little more to do. I went on and assisted at the siege of Capua, but it was mere dabbling in war, and Li Calsi probably felt that the work was over, and well over, without him, and he might as well rest and be thankful at Palermo, most delightful of southern cities. But I am not writing my life abroad, or the story of my Garibaldian campaign at Naples, and I make haste to return to Brighton.

The musical parties at Brighton were a source of very mixed satisfaction to me. I believe I always had the instinct of a *virtuoso,* and I certainly had the irritability and impatience of one. It was not *de rigueur* at Brighton to listen to anyone, but I never could bear playing to people who did not listen. In mixed companies I resorted to every conceivable trick and device to ensnare attention; and I am quite aware—as STERNDALE BENNETT, who accompanied the first solo I ever played in a public concert room, told me some years afterwards—that I injured my style by a partiality for crude and sensational effect, which my better judgment even then revolted from.

I had the deepest contempt for mixed audiences. On more than one occasion, when I had been unable with my utmost efforts to silence the roar of conversation, I have simply laid down my violin in the middle of a bar, and received the thanks of my hostess—who thought it was all right and quite "too-too"—with a smile and a bow far more satirical than polite. But I am bound to say that the violin, being in those days somewhat of a novelty in private society, and I having won a sort of reputation, I usually got the ear of the room, and I may perhaps, without undue vanity say, usually kept it.

Being naturally short of stature, I have suffered much from having often to play behind a crowd, a few only of whom

could either hear or see me. The soloist or singer ought always to be raised, if possible. He has to magnetise his audience as well as play to them. He cannot do this unless he can see and be seen. When I got more knowing, I always chose a vantage-ground and cleared a space in front of me. The next best thing to being *raised* for a speaker or a player is to be *isolated*. Public performers often neglect this. I have seen a singer in a dark dress against a dark background, and half-way down the room she has been undistinguishable from the chorus behind her. I have seen a lecturer in a black coat, with a black board for his background, and a little way off it has been "Vox et præterea nihil."

48. THE SOLOIST MUST BE SEEN.

As from the age of seven I have always played the violin more or less publicly, I entered upon my amateur career at Brighton without the smallest nervousness. My facility was very great, but my execution, although showy (and, I blush to add, tricky), was never as finished as I could have desired. My tone, however, was considered by Oury remarkable, and except when drilling me with a purpose he would never interfere with my reading of a solo. It was the only point in which he gave in to me.

49. "*MOMENTS PERDUS.*"

"I never taught you that," he would say sharply.

"Shall I alter it?" I would ask.

"No, no, let it alone; follow your own inspiration; you must do as you will, the effect is good."

Indeed, no one ever taught me the art of drawing tears from the eyes of my listeners. Moments came to me when I was playing—I seemed far away from the world. I was not scheming for effect—there was no trick about it. I could give no reason for the *rall*, the *p*, the *pp*, the *f*. Something in my soul ordered it so, and my fingers followed, communicating every inner vibration through their tips to the vibrating string until the mighty heart of the Cremona pealed out like a clarion, or whispered tremblingly in response. But those moments did not come to me in mixed, buzzing audiences; then I merely waged impatient war with a mob.

They came in still rooms where a few were met, and the lights were low, and the windows open toward the sea.

They came in brilliantly lighted halls, what time I had full command from some platform of an attentive crowd gathered to listen, not to chatter.

They came when some one or other sat and played with me, whose spirit-pulses rose and fell with mine—in a world of sound where the morning stars seemed always singing together.

I was such a thorn in the side of my accompanyists that at last they got to have a wholesome dread of me. In this way I often got off playing at houses where people asked

me to bring my violin *impromptu*, because I happened to be the fashion.

50. A SACRIFICE.

I remember one such house—the young lady who was to accompany me had just come home from school with all the accomplishments. Her music was so superfine that she had even learned to play MENDELSSOHN'S "Songs without Words," No. I., Book I., vilely, as I am afraid I told her in language more true than polite. I was just seventeen. She was very good-looking, with a considerable opinion of my musical faculties, and apparently not unwilling to be taught, so I went through No. I., Book I. I was sanguine enough to hope that I might impart to her a right feeling for it. All in vain. She played it like a bit of wood—mechanically correct and mechanically stupid. I gave it up, and took out my violin—it was the morning, and we had met to rehearse quietly for the evening RODE'S air in G. Of course, the accompaniment to this was simple, very simple, but all depended upon the sympathetic following—a hair's-breadth out, and the whole would be marred. I felt blank enough at the prospect after No. I., Book I. She glanced at the music.

"It 's not very difficult, is it?"

"Oh dear no," I replied, "the notes *you* have to play are easy enough; you must follow me. It 's not in strict time, you know. I play it varying the time accord-

ing to expression, and you must watch and wait for me."

So we began. I stopped her at the second bar. We began again. I stopped her at the fourth bar. I was very patient but very determined. She was very good and patient too, but alas! hopelessly incompetent. I stopped her at the sixth bar—I was losing my temper a little. I did not notice her growing distress. I went on saying rather hardly, "You came in too soon," "You don't wait for me," "Begin again," and so on. Not until I turned round to rebuke the unfortunate girl for a new blunder, and saw a great tear roll on to the ivory keys, accompanied by a little suppressed sob, was I fully alive to the situation. My angry complaint died upon my lips. I muttered some clumsy apology, but she rose from the piano scarlet with humiliation and rushed out of the room. I felt like a brute, but I was profoundly thankful to think that I had escaped the ordeal of having to go through RODE's air in G with a young lady who had just given me such a taste of her quality.

I am glad to say that, although her mother thought it silly, this was the first and last time she ever played in my presence, or proposed to accompany me. This is only a specimen of the trials I had to go through when I was a violin-playing youth about Brighton and elsewhere.

Some of the best rooms for music which I have played in at Brighton are the drawing-rooms in Adelaide Crescent,

and some among the worst are to be found in Lansdowne Place. I suppose I had my unknown admirers, as one day I received an invitation to a ball given by the officers then quartered at Brighton, whom I used to meet in society, but only knew by sight. This, on account of my youth, I was very properly advised to decline, as well as many other invitations to *play* at the houses of strangers who got introductions to me through those occasionally doubtful blessings called "mutual friends."

51. BRIGHTON TASTE.

From what I have said it will appear that musical taste in Brighton about 1856 was not high. I can hardly recollect a salient point to relieve the dull dead level of amateur dabbling. Here and there one met with a pianist of promise, a strong cornet or private flute, with considerable taste and execution, and invariably out of tune with the piano, and the usual number of girls singing the ditties of "Claribel" or "Virginia Gabriel," &c., who have at last been crowded out, I am thankful to say, by ARTHUR SULLIVAN, F. CLAY, and TOSTI.

I was always very open to new musical impressions, and very ready to hail the least symptoms of musical ability. Amateurs suppose that persons who have studied music, especially professionals, are hard to please. This is a mistake. A real musician gives you the utmost credit for what you do, and even for what you *try* to do. He can put up with almost anything but stupid

52. MUSICAL QUALITY.

insensibility and conceit. He discerns quickly the least spark of talent, and makes little account of deficiencies which time and industry will correct. When I hear anyone, I cannot help instinctively gauging their first-rate musical organisation, second-rate ditto, third-rate ditto, fourth organic incompetence. Of course there is every degree, and anything below second-rate quality is in my opinion not worth cultivating. The curse of English professional music is the plethora of second-rate quality. The glory of English amateur music is that sprinkling of first-rate quality which towers above the dead level of amateur incompetence. The dullest thing I know is to listen to cultivated second-class quality, amateur or professional. It is not bad enough to condemn, nor good enough to praise, nor interesting enough to listen to. 'Tis the pretentious curse of drawing-rooms, the bane of concert rooms, and the despair of helpless creatures who struggle about in the whirlpool of London music and subside into nursery governesses, milliners, or marriage.

53. NATURAL GIFTS.

There are some people whose musical organisation is so fine, and whose instinctive method is so true, that without that stern discipline usually essential to the production of the voice, they have managed to teach themselves how to sing modestly but faultlessly, as far as they go, although not knowing even their notes. Those people will sing you a national ballad with true

pathos, and even a certain technical finish, which many a skilled professional might envy.

I remember delighting in LORD HEADLEY'S singing, which was of this kind. He lived close to us, in Brunswick Square, and I often heard him after dinner sing his Irish ballads—not invariably MOORE, but some wilder still, and some quite unfamiliar to me. He used to throw back his rather large head, and display a very broad white waistcoat; and standing with his two thumbs thrust into the armholes of his waistcoat, and his fingers spread out and twitching nervously with emotion, he would pour out his ditty with the truest instinct and often finest pathos. In this, without knowing a note of music, he evidently took exceeding delight himself, and so did we. He who loves the sound of his own voice is not always so fortunate. LORD HEADLEY'S voice was small, flexible, and exquisitely sympathetic, and made me always think of TOM MOORE'S graceful musical declamation of the Irish melodies, which, of course, I had only read about.

54. SEASIDE MINSTRELS.

I do not think, on the whole, the sea-coast street music, especially at Brighton, has improved during the last thirty years—the German bands, niggers, and itinerant troubadours. I can recollect fine part-singing out of doors in the old days, and I know of no small band—violin, tenor, flute, and harp—at all comparable to that of SIGNOR BENEVENTANO, who used to play on the

beach at Brighton, with a power of expression that drew crowds, and half-crowns too. I was so much fascinated by this Italian, that I took him home with me and bade him try my violin. It was simply horrible. He scraped, and rasped, and powdered the rosin all over the finger-board, till I was glad to get the instrument out of his hands. The fact is, the coarse playing, so effective on the Parade, was intolerable indoors. He was essentially a street player —a genius,—but his music was, like coarse and effective scene-painting, better a little way off. Once after that I gave him a lunch at "Mutton's"; but I found him dull, servile, uneducated, and stupid to a degree, even about music. I discovered that he could not write down his own arrangements, which were so effective; the modest harper, content to efface himself, did it all, and BENEVENTANO only provided the general idea, and stamped the performance with his strongly-flavoured and dramatic genius, which drew the half-crowns. Ah, SIGNOR BENEVENTANO! your qualities are too rare. There are plenty who can play the violin better than you, but would never arrest the passer by. You were a child of Nature more than of Art, but you had just that one touch which makes the whole world kin; and the hundreds that nightly listened to you with rapt and breathless attention, did not know and did not care what school you belonged to, for you held the golden key of passion that unlocks all hearts.

III.

CAMBRIDGE.

1856–1859.

I WENT up to Trinity College in 1856. I was completely alone. I had an introduction to DR. WHEWELL, the Master of Trinity. But what was DR. WHEWELL to me, or I to DR. WHEWELL? Something, strange to say, we were destined still to be to each other. Of this more anon.

55. DR. WHEWELL AND SEDGWICK.

Soon after passing my entrance examination, I was summoned into the great man's presence. In the course of our interview, I ventured rashly to say that I understood Cambridge was more given to mathematics than to classics. DR. WHEWELL replied, with lofty forbearance, that when I had been a little longer at Cambridge I should possibly correct that opinion. As I had entered under the college-tutor, MR. MUNRO, perhaps the most famous Latin scholar of the day, my remark was indeed an unfortunate one, most fully displaying my simplicity and ignorance.

The Master questioned me as to my aims and ambitions. I had none—I told him so very simply—I played the fiddle. He seemed surprised; but from the first moment of seeing him I took a liking to him, and I believe he did to me. He had been seldom known to notice a Freshman personally, unless it were some public school-boy of distinction. After

my first interview, I was closely questioned at dinner in hall, when I found that WHEWELL was regarded as a sort of ogre, not to be approached without the utmost awe, and to be generally avoided if possible. Of this I had been happily ignorant; and, indeed, there had been nothing to alarm me in the great man. His physique was that of a sturdy miner; his face, to my mind, noble, majestic, and, as most thought, ugly. But I shall never look upon his like again. His walk was impressive; his flowing gown gathered negligently about him. I can see him now, as he stalked across the quad into the Trinity Lodge. He was one of Nature's intellectual monarchs. His reputation was world-wide. I shall never forget that broad forehead, with its bushy eye-brows, and those flashing eyes. I remember him so very distinctly as he used to sit in the Master's stall at chapel; his very presence seemed to lend a certain dignity to that light and inattentive assembly of collegians, most of whom only "turned up" to be "pricked off," under pain of being "hauled up." In the companion stall sat another noble figure, PROFESSOR SEDGWICK, also of European fame, then professor of geology, and far advanced in years.

Grand old WHEWELL! encyclopædic mind! Genial, eloquent Sedgwick! most loving teacher of fossil truth! Where are your successors? Ye were men of large and monumental type. When you departed, one after the other, the very university seemed to shrink. I look back at that time—Whewell, Sedgwick, Donaldson, Munro, all in office to-

gether at Cambridge, whilst Macaulay, Livingstone, Owen, Lord Lawrence, and Tennyson came to dine as guests at the Trinity high table, and appeared in chapel afterwards. Truly there were giants in the land in those days!

Whewell, who contrived to say something rude to everybody he knew sooner or later, never but once spoke a harsh word to me. It was on this wise. He had a particular objection to undergraduates standing on the Trinity bridge and looking over into the river. I suppose he thought it mere idleness—which, indeed, it generally was. I was in feeble health at the time, and one morning I was looking over the bridge, in the mild sunshine of spring, into the river. By came the master, with his rapid and magisterial stride.

"I'll thank you, Mr. Haweis," he said abruptly, "not to loiter on the bridge," and he swept past me angrily, before ever I had time to cap him. I am glad now even of that little memory.

His intellect was immense, his knowledge vast, his virtues many and great, his nature rugged and combative, and his kindness of heart undoubted; his faults were all on the surface—they were of an irritating and offensive character, and any fool could carp at them. I was not fool enough to be annoyed at the great man's brusqueness, and before long I had other proofs of his gentleness, forbearance, and even genuine humility. On one occasion, in all the conceit and

"bumptiousness" of a freshman, I wrote a saucy letter in the newspaper, reflecting upon the manner in which the Vice-Chancellors selected the university preachers. Whewell was Vice-Chancellor, and I repented and apologised to him. I have his letter now; kind, gentle, and dignified, without a touch of harshness, with advice like a father's.

Whewell's evening parties—called by the freshmen Whewell's "Stand-ups," because undergraduates were not supposed to "sit" on these solemn occasions—were most abhorred in my time; but I lived to see a great change.

. . . . .

The Master married, during my term of college life, Lady Affleck, a charming person, and from the time she became mistress at the Lodge the rugged old lion seemed to grow affable, and gentle, and apparently eager to do what he could to make people "at home." I have seen his wife go up to him and whisper in his ear, and the Master would nod approval, and thread his way at her bidding through the crowd of guests to someone who had to be introduced or noticed. The parties at the Lodge grew suddenly pleasant and sought after; the men sat down and chatted, and Lady Affleck—a thing unknown in Whewell's lonely days—introduced the undergraduates to the young ladies present.

When he married, the Master did a very graceful thing. He sent for me one morning, brought Lady Affleck into the drawing-room, and said in his bluff way, "Mr. Haweis,

I wish you to know LADY AFFLECK, my wife. She is musical; she wishes to hear your violin." The Master then left me with her, and she got me to arrange to come and play at the Lodge on the following night at a great party. I was to bring my own accompanyist. I had played at DR. WHEWELL'S before that night, but that night the master paid me special attention. It was part of his greatness and of his true humility to recognise any sort of merit, even when most different in kind to his own.

56. WHEWELL AND MUSIC.

WHEWELL'S ability was of a truly cosmic and universal character, but nature had denied him one gift—the gift of music. He always beat time in chapel, and generally sang atrociously out of tune. I do not think he had any ear; music to him was something marvellous and fascinating; he could talk learnedly on music, admire music, go to concerts, have music at his house, worry over it, insist upon silence when it was going on; and yet I knew, and he knew that I knew, that he knew nothing about it; it was a closed world to him, a riddle, yet one he was incessantly bent upon solving, and he felt that I had the key to it and he had not.

On that night I played ERNST'S "Elégie," not quite so hackneyed then as it is now, and some other occasional pieces by ERNST, in which I gave the full rein to my fancy. The Master left his company, and taking a chair in front

of where I stood, remained in absorbed meditation during the performance.

I was naturally a little elated at this mark of respect shown to an unknown freshman in the presence of so many "Heads" of Houses and the *élite* of the University. I played my best and indulged rather freely in a few more or less illegitimate dodges, which I thought calculated to bewilder the great man. I was rewarded, for at the close Dr. Whewell laid his hand upon my arm. "Tell me one thing; how do you produce that rapid passage, ascending and descending notes of fixed intervals?" I had simply as a *tour de force* glided my whole hand up and down the fourth open string, taking, of course, the complete series of harmonics up and down several times and producing thus the effect of a rapid cadenza with the utmost ease; the trick only requires a certain lightness of touch, and a knowledge of where and when to stop with effect. I replied that I had only used the series of open harmonics which are yielded, according to the well-known mathematical law, by every stretched string when the vibration is interrupted at the fixed harmonic nodes. The artistic application of a law which, perhaps, he had never realised but in theory seemed to delight him intensely, and he listened whilst I repeated the cadenza, and again and again showed him the various intervals on the finger-board, where the open harmonics might be made to speak; a hair's-breadth one way or the other producing a horrid scratch instead of the sweet

flute-like ring. It struck him as marvellous how a violinist could hit upon the various intervals to such a nicety, as to evoke the harmonic notes. I replied that this was easy enough when the hand was simply swept up and down the string as I had done, but that to hit upon the lesser nodes for single harmonics was one of the recognised violin difficulties. I then showed him a series of *stopped* harmonics, and played, much to his surprise, a tune in stopped harmonics. He was interested to hear that PAGANINI had been the first to introduce this practice, which has since become common property. But I have a little anticipated.

57. MY NEIGHBOURS.

After the anxiety of my entrance examination at Trinity College, which I passed without glory, I solaced my loneliness by making as much noise as ever I could on my violin. I had three rooms at the furthest extremity of the old court leading into the Bishop's Hostel. Open windows commanding two Quads made me a very formidable and undesirable neighbour. Incessant practising with a saloon pistol—with which I was a crack shot—on my doors added a general liveliness to the situation. Occasionally I received midnight expostulations. It was agreed at last that firing was not to go on after eight o'clock, nor music after ten. This latter rule was, I admit, more honoured in the breach than the observance, and often have I seen MR. FROST or JOHN

Lunn—musical fellows of neighbouring colleges—pounding away in their shirt-sleeves, cigar in mouth, at my piano till past midnight, while I myself, the present Earl of Mar, and Mr. George Cooke—still a notable violoncello player in London (1883)—&c., made up the quartet or quintet in the rear. The consumption of beer and buttered muffins after tea was unusually large on certain hot nights. The listeners who stepped in to smoke and chat, declared that under the infliction of music additional support was absolutely needed. The dean occasionally sent polite and deprecatory messages from over the way, whilst Messrs. Hammond and Burn, fellows of Trinity, who "kept" just underneath me on the same stair-case, exhibited a certain angelic forbearance with the pandemonium upstairs which, after the lapse of twenty-five years, I cannot sufficiently admire.

My mathematics may have been weak, and my classics uncertain, but it was impossible to ignore my existence. I had not been up a fortnight when the president of the Cambridge University Musical Society called upon me. He believed I played the violin. "How did he know that?" I asked. He laughed out, "Everybody in the place knows it." Then and there he requested me to join the Musical Society, and play a solo at the next concert. I readily agreed, and from that time I became solo violinist at the Cambridge Musical

58. I PLAY A SOLO.

Society, and played a solo at nearly every concert in the Town Hall for the next three years.

I confess to some nervousness on my first public appearance at a University Concert. It was a grand night. STERNDALE BENNETT, our new professor of music, himself conducted his "May Queen," and I think MR. COLERIDGE, an enthusiastic amateur and old musical star at the University, since very well known in London, sang. I had selected as my *cheval de bataille,* RODE'S air in G with variations, and to my own surprise, when my turn came to go on, I was quite shaky. The hall was crammed, the Master of Trinity sat in the front row with other heads of colleges and their families. I tuned in the ante-room. Someone offered me a glass of wine. I had never resorted to stimulants before playing, but I rashly drank it; it was in my head at once. STERNDALE BENNETT conducted me to the platform. I was a total stranger to the company—a freshman in my second month only. My fingers felt limp and unrestrained, my head was half swimming. The crowd looked like a mist. I played with exaggerated expression. I tore the passion to tatters. I trampled on the time. I felt the excess of sentiment was bad, and specially abhorrent to STERNDALE BENNETT, who followed my vagaries like a lamb, bless him for ever!

But the thing took. The style was new; at least it was unconventional and probably daring, for I really hardly knew what I was about. The Air was listened to in dead silence,

half out of curiosity no doubt; but a burst of applause followed the last die-away notes. I plunged into the variations; I felt my execution slovenly and beneath my usual mark; but I was more than once interrupted by applause, and at the close of the next cantabile movement of extreme beauty, which I played better—a sort of meditation on the original air—the enthusiasm rose to fever pitch; men stood up in the distant gallery and waved their caps, and I remained holding my violin, unable to proceed with the last rapid variation. When silence was restored I played this atrociously; I hardly played it at all, it was quite wild. STERNDALE BENNETT, seeing that it was all up with me that night, hurried and banged it through anyhow; but the critical faculty of the room was gone, so was my head; I had won by a toss, and although then, and often afterwards, owing to neglect of practice, I was frequently not up to my own mark, my position as solo violinist at the University Concerts was never disputed up to the time that I took my degree.

My most extensive effort was DE BERIOT's first concerto, which I played through by heart, of course, with full orchestra. It did not go well, the band was not perfectly drilled and too often smothered me; but I was bent on playing with a full orchestra, and I had my will; but I never repeated the experiment at those concerts. As I was invariably encored I taxed my

59. OLD DOG TRAY.

ingenuity to devise new sensations. "Old Dog Tray," the words of which were at that time very familiar, was a favourite *encore*, the first verse taken cheerfully, and each verse up to the sausage verse increasing in pathos and emotion until the climax was reached in—

Some tempting mutton pies
In which I recognise
The flavour of my old dog Tray.
Old dog Tray he was faithful, etc. etc.

The audience were never tired of following the sound-drama conducted by me through its various stages, until the sausage verse invariably broke down amidst roars of laughter.

60. MY QUARTET SOCIETY.

In my first term, as I have intimated, I had formed a quartet society, which met in my rooms. The two violins were the EARL OF MAR and myself; the tenor varied, but MR. GEORGE COOKE was our standing violoncello. HAYDN, in some respects the greatest quartet writer, was our staple, but we went into MOZART and BEETHOVEN, and we worked up the great BEETHOVEN septet with the assistance of the piano. The Canzonet quartet and MENDELSSOHN'S quintet were amongst our favourites, but the last movement in the great quintet was a *pièce de résistance* which we never quite overcame.

To this close and genial little society I owe my practical acquaintance with most of the famous quartets. I was a great deal too much "about" to do any real good with

classics or mathematics. I was playing somewhere nearly every night, and had the *entrée* at most evening parties held at the Trinity Lodge, the Master of Sidney-Sussex, Dr. Phelps — brother of the great actor — St. John's, Catherine's Hall (Philpott's, now Bishop of Worcester), Harvey Goodwin (now Bishop of Carlisle), &c. My town connection was also pretty extensive. At the house of my kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. R. Potts (of Euclid celebrity), I was ever welcome. There I met Adams, of comet celebrity; Babington, who popped a little American weed into the Cam one day, which choked all the rivers in England for several years. Many other scholars and men of science were frequent visitors at Mr. Potts' house on Parker's Piece, but I think I was perhaps as frequent as any of them.

Henry Kingsley, Fellow and Tutor of Sidney, met me at the house of Hopkins, the eminent mathematician, one night, and was so pleased with my playing of Beethoven's F sonata that he gave me the whole set. He took me to his room and showed me a most interesting series of Turner's water-colours, of which he was a great collector. He pointed out the rapidity and eager fidelity of Turner's work. Two extraordinary water-colour studies of a descending avalanche in the Alps struck me very much. Turner had dashed off the first where the snow cataract began, and, rushing to

61. HENRY KINGSLEY AND TURNER.

another spot lower down the mountain, he was just in time to make another sketch before the avalanche had reached the bottom. I also saw several sketches all blurred. TURNER had doubled up the paper, wet as it was, and put it into his pocket, thus destroying his work as soon as he had "taken his observation." In others the rapid painter had dabbled away quickly over a folded crease of the paper. KINGSLEY had stretched it, cut out the white angle, and joined together the parts that tallied.

My father had been a great admirer of TURNER, and a great reader of RUSKIN. I could just remember TURNER'S later pictures appearing in the Academy, and I distinctly remember my father's reading out passages from the immortal *Seven Lamps* and *Stones of Venice*. I was, therefore, prepared for KINGSLEY'S attentions; and as I was able to feed him with one art, he generously gave me all the pleasure he could with another. I was very grateful to KINGSLEY for his friendly appreciation. He never treated me as merely a fiddler—this was the tone of the fellows and tutors and public schoolmen at my own college. I began to see that if a man does one thing well, he cannot easily get credit for doing anything else. I remembered this when I went into the Church and dropped my violin. I did not, indeed, spend much time at college over my class work, but I spent long hours in the University library and pored incessantly over DANTE, GOETHE, HEINE, and the German philosophers — HEGEL, FICHTE, SCHELLING, and

the SCHLEGELS—with dictionaries and translations. I had a passion for writing, though, unfortunately, I had nothing to say. MR. W. G. CLARKE, the public orator, and one of my examiners, whilst declaring my hand-writing to be almost illegible—a statement in which he was correct—observed with a friendly smile, which stung me (in my heart full of literary ambition) to the quick, "More at home with the violin bow, Mr. Haweis, than the pen—eh?" And I remember one night, when I was dining at the Master of Sidney's, the great DOCTOR DONALDSON saying across the table to HARVEY GOODWIN (now Bishop of Carlisle), also one of my senate house examiners, "Well, I never examined Mr. Haweis in classics or mathematics, but I can bear witness that, whatever he may be in the senate house, he invariably passes a brilliant examination in the concert-room."

I could never get the smallest recognition of any kind at the University from the authorities for anything but music.

"THE LION" AND "THE BEAR."

62. I tried hard for the prize poem on "Delhi," for the English essay on "Mary Queen of Scots," in vain. But my literary enthusiasm could not be quenched, and, with the assistance of one or two clever undergraduates, who have since risen to name and fame, and whom I will therefore spare, I floated a University magazine called *The Lion*.

My own contributions alone would have been quite

enough to damn that preposterous serial; but GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN, who had just come up from Harrow, thought it would be well and pleasant to hasten the process. So he issued *The Bear,* which consisted of short parodies of articles that had appeared in *The Lion.* The thing was cleverly and good-humouredly done, and to me the moral was "stick to the fiddle." *The Lion* expired with a bumptious roar in the third number; it contained, however, the only readable article I had yet written—readable because written from my heart—on "MENDELSSOHN." We got a vast deal of fun out of our little venture. The greatest success was certainly in calling forth *The Bear* which slew it, and a wag suggested that a new University magazine should be started called *David,* to "slay both the *Lion* and the *Bear.*"

63. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

From that time I ceased to instruct an ungrateful and prejudiced University, but I continued for some years to deluge the provincial press with columns of inflated bombast on a variety of topics, such as transcendental metaphysics, the position of women, and other matters about which I knew absolutely nothing. As I now look back upon those scrap-books full of articles, it is inconceivable to me how they ever got printed. But I had always the pen of a ready writer, and along with it the common misfortune of having very little to say. But such matters only touch at certain points my musical life, and I willingly return to my muttons.

One day as I was sitting in my arm-chair with an open book upon my knee, contemplating vaguely the row of china musicians' heads on little brackets over my mantel-piece, a knock came at the door. My "oak was sported," and I accordingly "did the dead." I was in no mood for interruption. In front of me, in the centre of my china row of busts—HANDEL, MOZART, HAYDN, CHOPIN—stood MENDELSSOHN'S bust, raised above the rest and draped with black velvet, with F.M.B. in gold on the velvet. The china face at times, as the light caught the shadows about the delicate mouth, seemed to smile down upon me. The high forehead surrounded by wavy hair, the aquiline nose——What? more knockings! I rose at last, and opening the door brusquely was confronted by a strange figure with a sort of wide plaid waistcoat, well-made frock-coat, heavily-dyed thin whiskers, and dark wig (as I well saw when the broad-brimmed hat was off), yellow gloves and patent boots. Middle-aged? No—in spite of the wig and showy get up—old, very old, but oddly vigorous, inclined to *embonpoint*, ruddy, florid, perhaps choleric face, marked features overspread now with a beaming smile and a knowing twinkle in the rather rheumy eyes.

64. OLD VENUA: A STRANGE VISITOR.

I never saw such an odd man. My anger evaporated. I laughed out almost, and instinctively extended my hand and shook that of the irresistible stranger warmly, although I did not know him from Adam.

"Beg pardon," he said, "may I come in? I tell you, my friend, my name is VENUA—never heard of me—no matter—old VENUA knows you; heard you play at the Town Hall—got the stuff in you; you can play d——d well; you can play better den dat—nature gif you all dis gift—you practise and den you play like ze d——l himself. Old VENUA, dey say to me, he know all about it—he can tell you how to play. Forty year ago you should have heard me play de fiddle by——I play de fiddle now; gif me your fiddle—vonderful tone your fiddle—where is your fiddle?"

All this was uttered without a pause, very rapidly.

The strange, rambling, stuttering, energetic, decided old creature had now rolled into my room; he had sat down and pulled out an enormous silk pocket-handkerchief. Then an old gold snuff-box. "This gif me by ze Grand Duke of Hesse Darmstadt. You take a pinch. Oh no! You are young man. You know noding of snuff—bad 'abit—young man, bad 'abit! never you take snuff! Old VENUA can't get on widout his snuff. All de bigwigs take snuff with old VENUA—but where is your fiddle? bring him out I say. Vonderful tone—let me see him."

What a jargon! Was it Italian, French, or German-English? I could never make out. In an old book, only the other day, I met with a short biography of a certain VENUA, violinist, who flourished at the beginning of this century. Old VENUA, of Cambridge, was undoubtedly this man. He was very long past his prime and utterly for-

gotten. I brought him out the fiddle; he put it to his chin; in a moment I could see he had played—his touch, execution, all but his intonation were gone, but his style was first-rate and his expression admirable in intention.

From that day I and old VENUA became close allies. He used to ask me to dine with him, generally on Sunday, and his ceaseless flow of anecdote and dramatic style of conversation amused me greatly.

He had known PAGANINI, he had seen BEETHOVEN, he had chatted with SPOHR, he remembered the first Napoleon. He mimicked HAYDN's style of conversation, violin in hand, as though he had been intimate with him too. Yet this was in 1859, and HAYDN died in 1809.

65. VENUA'S TALK.

"Gif me a sobjech," says HAYDN. "Zo!—here—Tra-la-doi-e-dee-dee, &c. &c. Zat will do, mein freund. HAYDN—make you on zat sobjech—a beautiful melody, and work it wonderful; gif you him a start off, he do all the rest. No quartet like the HAYDN quartet, my young freund—he is the great master of the string instrument—he knows the just combinazione—he gif all their due. SPOHR he all first fiddle—he make all de rest lacqueys to first fiddle. MENDELSSOHN he make an orchestra of his quartet. BEETHOVEN vonderful always. MOZART he learn all of HAYDN—he come after him and die before him. He never write quartet

better zan de Papa HAYDN—he find new ideas and he write new things—he great master of vat you call de form—of his composition—but in de string quartet HAYDN ze great creator—a Brince—a real Brince and founder of ze quartet art!"

VENUA loved the violin, and his impromptu lectures upon it taught me much—always characteristic, humorous, genial, and to the point.

"If you want to make a man irritable, discontented, restless, miserable, give him a violin."

"Why?" said I.

"Because," he replied—and I will now resume to some extent the use of my own language—"the violin is the most exacting and inexorable of non-human things. A loose joint somewhere and he goes 'tubby' (a term used to express a dull vibration), a worn finger-board and he squeaks, a bridge too high and his note grows hard and bitter, or too low and he whizzes, or too forward and one string goes loud, or too backward and two strings go soft and weak; and the sound-post (*i.e.* the little peg which bears the strain on the belly and back), mein Gott! dat is de Teffel." But, correcting himself, he added, "No, the French are right, they call it the soul of the violin, *l'âme du violon*; and it is the soul—if that is not right, all the fiddle goes wrong. A man may sit the whole morning worrying the sound-post a shade this way or that, and at last, in despair, he will give it up; then he will go to the bridge and waste his whole

afternoon fidgeting it about, and then he will give that up. A hair's-breadth this way with the bridge—oh! the fourth string is lovely; but, bah! the second and third are killed; a little back then, and now the fourth is dead, and the *chanterelle* (*i.e.* first string) sings like a lark—misery! it is the only string vat sing at all. Give him a fiddle!" cried the old gentleman, gesticulating; "yes, give him a fiddle, it will make him mad!"

Interspersed with such droll exaggerations were excellent hints, such as, "Leave your bridge and your sound-post alone if ever you get the fiddle to sound near right; don't change your bridge unless you are absolutely obliged—sound-board, neck, head, nut, everything, but not the bridge; a fiddle and a bridge that have lived for years together love each other as man and wife; let them alone, my young freund, vy make mischief?" and old VENUA's eye twinkled as he chuckled at his own joke, and never ceased talking and flourishing his arms.

It was VENUA who first taught me about the fabric of the violin what my old master, OURY—who was a pupil of MORI—first made me feel about violin playing—a tender love and sympathy for the instrument as well as the art.

What was VENUA's connection with Cambridge I never could make out. He seemed independent. He had long ceased to teach or play, yet he was frequently away, and appeared only at intervals, always retaining the same lodg-

ings at Cambridge, and generally giving me a call when he was in town. When I came up, about a year after leaving the University, for my voluntary theological examination, I inquired for my old friend VENUA; but he was gone, and no one could give me any news of him. I never saw him again. He remained to me simply a detached episode in my musical life.

66. A CONCERT FREAK.

I think it was in my second year (1858) at college that a few friends, more enterprising than discreet, revealed to me a design which promised to yield considerable amusement, if not profit. They proposed to get out large hand-bills in a town some fifteen miles away, stating that a distinguished foreign company, consisting of Signor this, that, and the other, and Herr so-and-so, would appear on a certain evening at the Town Hall, and give a concert of an exceptionally attractive character. I agreed to be of the party, and we all disguised ourselves with false hair, I wearing a flowing beard and ample moustache. We cultivated broken English. Only one of us—who acted as agent and made arrangements at the inn, saw to the posters, and took the money—spoke our native tongue with anything like fluency. We arrived about six o'clock; the concert was at eight. We walked through the town in heavy great coats, well muffled up, although it was now the middle of summer, and admired the large bills on the hoardings; my own

name was specially big, as the celebrated German violinist, Herr Ernstein. Things were going merrily, and it was rumoured that we should have a full room, when at six o'clock the news arrived in the town that one of the most respectable inhabitants of the place had been run over on the railway. This cast a sudden gloom over the place. There was talk about postponing the concert, but several people had taken tickets, and we felt bound to go through with it. Very few, however, turned up, and the attendance was so thin that it became a question whether we should not offer the audience their money back and suspend operations, out of deference to the wide-spread feeling. We ultimately compromised the matter by going through with the first part of the concert only. We none of us made our fortunes that night, and we returned to Cambridge by the last train rather crest-fallen, and considerably after midnight.

67. MUSIC AND MOONLIGHT.

The moon was shining brightly, the air was warm and balmy. We walked from the station to the old market-place. None of us had the courage to repair to our colleges; besides, we had all provided ourselves with *exeats*, so that our reappearance about one o'clock in the morning would have looked, to say the least, odd.

The Cambridge market-place was deserted. We held a council of war. We were in no particular hurry, and as

we could not make up our minds what to do, I took out my violin, sat down on a stone-slab, and waked the echoes.

Out of a dark side-street presently strode, or rather shuffled up, a strange-looking man. As I played on he sidled up to me and stood gazing at me in mute astonishment. When I ceased he gasped out:

"Who be you, Sir?"

"Who should you think?" I said.

"Dun-no, Sir; never 'eered anything like it afore in all my born days!"

"Fond of music?" I said cheerfully, and was preparing to give him another taste of my quality, when he laid his grimy hand on my arm, and peering into my face, said:

"You jist tell me one thing, Sir. Be you one of the gents that 's a coming down next week with Mr. Jullien's band?"

"Why—if they 're only coming down next week, I should say not."

My companion, our agent, here plucked me by the sleeve; he had gained admittance to an inn hard by, and it being now nearly two o'clock we concluded to turn in. I have come to the conclusion that adventures of this kind are better before and afterwards; at the time they are often but poor sport, but they are anticipated with pleasure and recalled with interest. I am not aware that our secret

was ever betrayed, or that our escapade was ever discovered.

Towards the close of my career at Cambridge a sort of rival to the Musical Society sprang up, which met at Sidney Hall, and was largely choral. MRS. ELLICOTT (wife of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol) was the vocal star at Cambridge in my time, and her services were usually in request whenever the concert could by any stretch of imagination be called of a private or a collegiate character. On special occasions, however, the Fitzwilliam programme admitted instrumental music, and the last occasion on which I played in public at Cambridge was when I led BEETHOVEN'S Grand Septuor for the Fitzwilliam Society in Sidney Hall.

68. MRS. ELLICOTT.

What my life at Cambridge might have been without my violin I cannot say. Had I worked harder at Latin, Greek, and mathematics, I sometimes ask myself, Who would have been the better for it now? Had I even got a fellowship, should I have been the better for it then? Had I read less miscellaneously, written less voluminously, played less habitually, and known half a dozen studious men only, instead of hundreds of all sorts, during those three years of college life, should I have been better or worse fitted for my after life than the studious men who went up with me

69. WHAT DOTH IT PROFIT?

were for theirs? Where are those studious men? One of the cleverest drank himself to death in India. Another senior wrangler—and not the only one I have known suffer thus—became unfit for several years for all mental exertion, and is now a lawyer—like any other lawyer. Some have subsided into the Church and are forgotten in country livings, useful, obscure, happy. Others were expected to do great things, but have not done them. Some are professors; others fellows of colleges, like other fellows of colleges; many are married and in every sense done for, and many are dead; a few have risen to eminence, but these were in no one instance the men who attained the very highest honours. Cecil Raikes, who usually sat opposite me in hall and was freshman in my year, is, I suppose (1883), in the running for the highest Parliamentary prizes. George Otto Trevelyan, who came up in my second year, always brilliant, many-sided, genial, has added to his versatile acquirements the qualities of a leading statesman. Fawcett, also my contemporary, is another remarkable instance of academical distinction and Parliamentary success. I cannot at this moment recall any distinguished writer, man of science, lawyer, or divine now before the world, who, during that time (1857–9), also obtained the highest honours at Cambridge, but others might probably assist my memory.

Of this I am certain, that the academical course paralyses some, develops others, and exerts over a considerable number no sort of mental influence whatever. Over me the

academical course exerted no sort of mental influence whatever. I shall perhaps be told that this was my own fault. Perhaps it was. I knew as much mathematics, and quite as much Latin and Greek, when I went up as when I took my degree. If I knew more history and philosophy, that was not due to the University training—the history and philosophy which the University required was just the sort of history and philosophy I did not happen to know. Almost all the knowledge which has been of any real use to me in the world I have acquired since my University proclaimed me Master of Arts. All that sort of knowledge which has enabled me to make money by my pen, to write books, to preach sermons, to give Royal Institution lectures, to organise parishes, to write leaders and edit journals, is of a kind which the University training not only does not impart, but tends rather to discourage.

The highest University training wins the highest University prizes, but it does not fit men for the highest honours which the world has to give. These are won generally by your good all-round men, your good classic, your senior optime or low wrangler; and sometimes—as in the case of TENNYSON, who won the Prize Poem at Cambridge, or my late lamented friend, the historian J. R. GREEN at Oxford (both good classics)—by men who have attained little if any University distinction in either classics or mathematics.

That I did not profit as I ought to have done by the studies of the place I freely admit. That I fiddled away

much of my time I cannot deny. But that I *wasted* it I cannot allow, although a M.A. degree is all the academical result I have to show for three years of elaborate and expensive training at Trinity College, Cambridge.

IV.

ITALY.

1860.

I took my degree in 1859 and disappeared from the University for more than a year. I was still not in good health, and my father thought that a little foreign travel might be good for me. I started with £80 to begin with, for Italy *viâ* Paris, and with strict injunctions to keep out of the way of the Italian Revolution then going on under Garibaldi, and, I may add, Cavour. How I was nearly roasted alive travelling straight through from Paris to Milan in the middle of June; how I found myself at Genoa in the autumn, and, being seized with the fever of the Revolution, went straight down to Naples, assisted at the siege of Capua—saw Garibaldi on the battle-field—heard him address the mob at Naples—witnessed the entrance of Victor Emmanuel into Naples, induced him to write his memoirs, and corresponded with him, narrowly escaped assassination on the Chiaja, saw Cavour, Ricasoli, the young princes, the beautiful and

70. WITH GARIBALDI.

unfortunate Queen of Naples, TÜRR, COZENZ, MEDICI, RONDI, one of GARIBALDI's aides-de-camp, and all the Garibaldian heroes with whom I mixed daily at St. Angelo, Caserta, Capua, Santa Maria, and Naples; saw, for the first time, Pope PIUS IX. (to whom I was presented twenty years afterwards), and was just in time to assist at the peace celebrations and great *Te Deum* at Milan, in the presence of the King and CAVOUR and DELLA MARMORA; all these and many other golden memories of the sunny south in the great historical year A.D. 1860 belong to another side of my autobiography, which I shall probably never think it worth while to write.

71. GARIBALDI'S HYMN.

The part which music played in the Italian Revolution was remarkable. A certain gay and intrepid march tune, characteristically called "Garibaldi's Hymn," was shouted, blown, scraped, and rattled on drums in and out of season. The whole spirit of the volunteer movement seemed to be in it. When I first heard it at Genoa, it sounded poor and commonplace; but as day by day and all day long it sounded in my ears, it began at last to ring in my head; and by the time I got to Naples I was humming and whistling it with all the world. To see the jaunty, ragged volunteers marching along the hot roads covered with white marble dust, and keeping pace to "Garibaldi's Hymn," is one of my most vivid memories. It was to Italians of 1860 what

Caprera 8 febbraio 1870

Mio Caro Barnes

Grazie per il gentile invito in casa vostra. Sarei ben andato in Inghilterra, per rivedere tutti coloro che si ricordano con piacere di me. Ma sono italiano, e mi dirette se posso indifferentemente vivere italiano o straniero.

Un vicino e buon Membro del Legislativo che gentilmente mi invita a mangiare

Vostro

G. Garibaldi

the "Marseillaise" was to the French of 1793—but as much purer and more joyous than that fierce and gloomy stave, as the movement for freedom under GARIBALDI and MAZZINI was brighter and purer than the confused and murderous cries for liberty in 1793 under ROBESPIERRE and DANTON.

A LETTER FROM GARIBALDI.

72. The most interesting memorials of GARIBALDI that remain to me are his autograph letters and his MS. memoirs. I have printed a fac-simile of a short note, one of several received about that time. The following is a translation:—

Caprera, February 8, 1870.

MY DEAR HAWEIS,

Thank you for your kind invitation to take up my quarters in your house, but I am not going to England just at present. I write to you by this courier in Italian: let me know whether it is indifferent to you whether I write in French or Italian. I received the numbers of *The Argosy* with your account of me, and I am grateful to you for them.

Yours,

G. GARIBALDI.

HAIR-BREADTH ESCAPES.

73. Looking back upon that exciting time I marvel at my good fortune. How I escaped the chances of disease and danger of all kinds, through which I passed scathless, I cannot imagine. A special Providence must have been watching over me. I travelled nine months in Italy, after losing my great-coat and having most of my luggage stolen. I neglected every

precaution and risked every danger. During the siege of Capua I was more than once nearly shot by the Neapolitan riflemen, twice on the point of assassination, and I narrowly escaped being blown to pieces by a shell at the batteries of St. Angelo.

To help the poor Garibaldians in the camp, I nearly starved myself outside the walls of Capua during the bombardment. They had my brandy, and my biscuits, and my cash; often too my broken-down horse, and at my Naples hotel the houseless and purseless ones sometimes shared even my bedroom. All day long, under a burning sun, I got soaked to the skin, with little get-at-able to eat or drink, but coffee and bread in the morning and some wretched apology for a meal at night. Provisions were scarce, and every restaurant in Santa Maria was cleaned out. A light shawl was all I had to keep off chill, malaria, and fever raging all round me. I drank freely the polluted water of Naples. I ate freely its dangerous red melons, inhaled the pestiferous air of its overcrowded back streets, in that monstrously unsanitary and overcrowded time; yet not once had I a touch of fever or any ailment whatever, except fits of exhaustion consequent upon over-heating and over-excitement, under-feeding and general bodily fatigue. My rickety constitution, which the disastrous malady of my boyhood had failed to shatter, must have been made of iron, and I dare say I shall live to the age of Methusaleh. I remember now how the small-pox

spared me when it raged as an epidemic in my first parish, St. Peter's, Bethnal Green; how the cholera spared me when it raged in my second East End parish, St. Peter's, Stepney. People who enjoy this kind of luck usually get hit at last; but I cannot but reflect, with wonder and thankfulness, that during the twenty years I have been in the Church, preaching in London on an average twice every Sunday, although often feeble and suffering, I have seldom been absent from my pulpit, and never once been unable to officiate, through indisposition. I think few even of the more robust of the London clergy can say as much.

74. MUSIC IN ITALY.

I was greatly struck by the musical poverty of Italy. Even the performances in the Scala at Milan were poor in comparison with the London and Paris opera-houses. The street music at Naples and at Venice was characteristic. In Florence and Pisa the guitar was played with a certain *élan* by the young men as they walked home at night, trolling out some graceful love-song or drinking ditty with light chorus, very different from our heavy drinking choruses. But the mechanical organs, with their eternal fragments of VERDI, were extremely wearisome, and the Italian pianoforte-playing, even when good, had little charm for ears accustomed to the inspirations of BEETHOVEN, SCHUMANN, MENDELSSOHN, CHOPIN, and MOZART. Still, the romance school of the pianoforte in Italy is a distinct one and not

to be ignored. FUMAGALLI was a man of real genius, who died too young; and TITO MATTEI now resident in England, has won many converts to the brilliant, sentimental, and sensational style ever dear to the heart of the Italian. But the classical reaction at Rome (1883), under SIGNOR SGAMBATI, threatens to make serious way. Less fertile in melody than VERDI, and more severe than LISZT, it may end in falling between two stools; but the ability of its founder and leader, SGAMBATI, is undoubted, and was duly recognised when he appeared in London, in 1882, at the Philharmonic and Crystal Palace concerts, as well as at an Italian *matinée* at my house, when he played with the Florentine violinist PAPINI, the Sicilian baritone VERGARA, and my old friend of good Garibaldian intentions, SIGNOR LI CALSI.

I have a few charming memories connected with music in Italy, but they all circle round my valued friend, C. H. DEACON, now so well known and so justly esteemed in the musical world of London. I arrived at Milan one Friday. The sun was pitilessly hot, the sky wearisomely blue. Sick, worn-out with all-night travel, for the first time in my life hundreds of miles away from any human being who cared whether I was dead or alive, my spirits were at their lowest ebb. I got in about the middle of the day, and, depositing my one portmanteau at the Hotel "Reale," wandered aimlessly

75. ALONE AT MILAN.

out into the broiling streets, and, being hungry and faint, entered a *café*. Everyone seemed half asleep; no one understood French, and so no one understood me. It was evidently not eating time at Milan. I could not touch the black coffee and stale sponge-cakes, so I got back to my bedroom, ordered a lemonade, and lay down thinking of "Home, sweet Home," and the friends in Brunswick Square, Brighton, whom I might have been lunching with had I not been such a fool as to come to Italy. I lodged at my capital Milanese hotel (1860)—breakfast, bed, and dinner for 7 frs. a day. At Florence and Rome the prices in those days were but 8 frs., and at Genoa 6 frs. I had not spoken to a soul for many hours. I never felt so utterly lost and alone before, nor have I ever felt so since. The second day I met at the *table d'hôte* a friendly face, the face of a good and genial man. It was the Rev. C. H. Andrews, then English chaplain at Milan. I solaced myself with some talk. The English Church service was held in a large room in our hotel. The next day was Sunday. I went to service in the morning. It was like sitting by the waters of Babylon; but I saw some English faces in that strange land, and began to take courage. Andrews was my only resource, so towards Andrews's door I made my way in the afternoon.

On entering, I found a gentleman seated—thin face, full moustache, well-dressed, refined in manner, and

charming in conversation. I was about to retire when both bade me be seated. ANDREWS at once presented me to this stranger. It was Mr. C. H. DEACON, the pillar of the English Church at Milan, and general friend and benefactor of all itinerant and homeless tourists who drifted into the English Church on their way through Milan.

76. GOLDEN NIGHTS.

To MR. and MRS. DEACON—since members of my congregation in London—and my good friend ANDREWS, I owe some of my happiest hours in Italy. On the hot nights ANDREWS and I, now become great friends, used to make our way naturally to DEACON'S charming house, and there, at the invitation of MRS. DEACON—most delightful of hostesses—drink unlimited tea and make music. I had not brought my violin to Italy—I should certainly have lost it if I had. I lost nearly everything that I had with me in Italy that year. I never touched a violin in Italy, but I soon found that DEACON was a splendid pianist; and at his house I met PEZZE, the violoncellist, and SESSA, the violinist. DEACON introduced me to REYNOLDS, who called himself Vice-Consul; and I remember that LORD BYRON'S cook, who was still living, served us up an admirable dinner one night at the Consul's residence.

The heat being overpowering, and the natives having chosen that moment for clearing the drains at my hotel,

the place became little better than a pest-house, and we concluded to go to the lakes. We went to Como. There DEACON joined us.

77. A STRANGE BELL.

I think it was in the Italian Alps that I first noticed the poetical effect of bells. The sound of convent bells across the Lake of Lugano, or over Como, where the sound is hemmed in between Carddenabbia and Bellagio, is to me full of haunting memories. There were other bells, too, on the Lake of Como, of a very puzzling kind, as will appear from what follows.

The deceptiveness of bell-sounds upon the water can only be compared to the deceptiveness of objects seen lying under the water, and the refraction of sound-waves to the ear is about equal to the refraction of light-waves to the eye. I remember rowing on the Lake of Como on one still summer night, and I heard what seemed to me the clear tinkle of a goat-bell, which I supposed to be coming from the sloping banks of the lake. Distant it certainly seemed, and yet singularly distinct. As I rowed on, it still sounded from afar, when suddenly through the darkness I heard a loud Italian oath from a boat a short distance from me. I paid no attention, but rowed on; the boat rowed after me with a flood of Italian Billingsgate. My mettle was now up, and, shipping oars, I repaired to the stern, and replied with all the strength and vivacity which my small acquaintance with Italian slang permitted.

Of the cause of dispute I was utterly ignorant, but I thought an unprovoked attack deserved a spirited reply; and so I freely devoted my unknown friend to the Diavolo, "Mars, Bacchus, Virorum," and the other pagan deities to which, by his vocabulary, I deemed him to be most partial. Between the pauses of our brisk civilities I heard the clear tinkle of the distant goat-bell (what had that to do with him?) and the chiming of the convent clocks all along the shore of the lake, when, suddenly leaning over the boat, my hand touched a large cork, on which hung a floating bell, and I perceived I had for some time been dragging, entangled astern, the fisherman's night-line, with its alarum destined to give warning against such marauders as myself. The distant bell, in fact, had been swinging close under my nose! There was no goat—only a cork, and my friend thought I was making a night-raid upon his fish! At that moment our boats met, and instead of coming to blows we explained, shook hands with much polite laughter, and, on one side at least, paid up with effusion.

78. FULL MOON.

Our hotel at Carddenabbia overlooked the lake. There was a grand piano in the great saloon, with a marble balcony opening upon the water. Here, when the moon was full upon Como, would DEACON play to us after dinner. The music went out into the night. The white mist bathed the opposite promontory of Bellagio. I can just remember a face on the balcony in the twilight

—and eyes, too. I was in my twenty-third year. I no longer sighed for Brunswick Square—I was reconciled to Italy.

V.

BETHNAL GREEN AND WESTMINSTER.

1861–1864.

79. A SUDDEN CHANGE.

I HAD for years been an irregular student of theology, and I had read very carefully most of the standard theological books—PEARSON, BUTLER, PALEY, HOOKER—and also weighted myself heavily with the High Church theology—PUSEY, NEWMAN, MANNING, KEBLE, MISS SEWELL, &c., besides reading MAURICE and W. F. ROBERTSON. This preparation laid me peculiarly open to the influence of *Essays and Reviews*, which I eagerly devoured at Florence on my way home, and I was soon afterwards further enlightened by the writings of JOWETT and COLENSO. These last are the men who gave me some hope for the future of the Church of England. The seed of something like an enlightened and liberal theology seemed to be sown. Theology soon absorbed the whole of my attention, and music went to the wall on my return from Italy. I went up to Cambridge for my voluntary theological examination in 1861, was ordained the same year,

went straight to my lodgings, in the district of St. Peter's, Hackney Road, Bethnal Green, and my violin career was virtually closed.

80. A SACRIFICE.

From the time that I entered the Church I have never played to any real purpose. I resolved to make that sacrifice, and no subsequent reflection has led me to repent of my decision. I could never have played the violin by halves, and had I come up to London and entered the Church in the character of a fiddling parson, I should in all probability never have got credit for, or applied myself seriously to win, any other position. At all events, I should have been heavily weighted and laid myself open to many temptations. I should always have been coming West in search of musical society and distraction, and people would have said, as indeed my old friends have said, and as my caricaturists continue to say, "He should have stuck to the one thing which he could do well, and not meddled with theology." These good people sometimes gave me credit for having made an heroic sacrifice. They knew nothing about it. The sacrifice I made was a very small one. From the age of eight to the age of twenty-three I had played the fiddle in season and out of season. Applause had lost its charm for me. I was hardened to flattery. My own critical taste disenchanted me with my own performances. Nothing but the best suited me, and I knew I never could attain to that as

an executant myself, because I never could take up the violin professionally. Then, fiddling was not my only taste. I had a passion for oratory, for literature, for the study of human nature, and for church work. For a time my new parochial sphere with its special enthusiasms expelled everything else.

81. AN EAST END PARISH.

I know not what glamour in those days hung over the grimy and repulsive aspects of Bethnal Green life. The reeking streets seemed beautiful to me in the evening sunshine; the unwashed and multitudinous children, feeding on garbage in the gutter, filled me with infinite tenderness and pity, the more so because they seemed so happy; the sick poor dying in back rooms, the workhouse wards, the close factory houses packed with pale girls starving at straw-bonnet work, the old men eternally dipping dolls' heads, the button-hole sewers, the infatuated weavers, descendants of the Huguenot refugees, still working their antiquated hand-looms at famine prices—all these scenes of my daily life seemed to me then exquisitely pathetic, novel, interesting, and exciting. I was not in the least depressed by the surrounding misery; I was not responsible for it. It was a problem to work at. I was strangely exhilarated by it. I was not left to struggle alone. The aristocracy of my congregation were the small tradespeople. They rallied round me nobly, and I loved them; they seemed to me infinitely good, and worthy, and staunch. I dropped in to tea at the back of the shop. I

cheered up the mother cumbered with much serving, and the daughters with their smiling faces and ready hands were my district visitors, and taught in the Sunday school.

82. JOHN RICHARD GREEN.

In those happy and hopeful days, the late Mr. J. R. GREEN, since famous as the author of *A Short History of the English People*, was my constant companion and close friend. He had a sole charge in the neighbouring parish of Hoxton, and for some two years we met almost daily; we were facing the same difficulties, discussing the same doubts, trying to solve the same problems.

83. MUSIC AND THE MASSES.

But this is no book concerning my clerical life. I hasten to recover the thin golden thread of music, which still continued, and probably will continue to the end, to run through my days, hidden at times in the complex fabric of the general life-work, but never really lost or broken. Thousands around me were leading dull lives of monotonous toil, with little refreshment or variety, too much shut up to the beer-house or the counter, tempted by want and gin, tempted also to all kinds of chicanery and petty theft, and full of sordid aims. I determined to try the effect of music, and good music, upon their narrow, busy, overburdened lives. I invited Mr. C. H. DEACON, SIGNOR REGONDI—incomparable on the guitar and concertina—and SIGNOR PEZZE to come down

and give a concert in the national school-room. The prices of admission were low—1*d.* and 3*d.* The room was crammed; the music was a little over the people's heads; the respectable element predominated a little too much, as I expected, but the class I aimed at was fairly represented. The audience was hushed, attentive, a little awed, but intensely appreciative. I did not play myself. No one had heard me play there, so no one expected me to play then; and I might have lost my character as general manager and president had I contributed to the programme in a musical capacity. I confess the old war-horse within me began to chafe and paw the ground, impatient for action, when the players got well to work. I seemed to feel that my real place was at their side. I had been too lately weaned, but I kept my feelings to myself.

I believe in music as I believe in pictures for the masses. It draws people together, oils the wheels of the social system, and very much facilitates the intercourse between a pastor and his flock. Music is better than penny readings or lectures for this purpose, chiefly because penny readings, as a rule, are so badly and stupidly conducted. For one person who can attract attention by his reading or lecturing, there are a dozen who can excite interest among the poorer classes by singing and playing; and professional musicians are, as a rule, very kind and liberal in giving their services if only a fit occasion presents itself.

Tea-meetings, speeches, and lectures were, however, easier

to organize, and I was not long enough at Bethnal Green—hardly two years—to test fairly by their frequency the good of cheap concerts for the people parochially, nor was it my own parish, nor had I entirely my own way. But the experiment has been notoriously successful since, in the shape of coffee music-halls and cheap entertainments for the people. I am convinced that the influence of music over the poor is quite angelic. Music is the hand-maid of religion and the mother of sympathy. The hymns and hymn tunes taken home by the children from church and chapel are blessed outlets of feeling, and full of religious instruction—they humanize households all through the land. The Moody and Sankey tunes have exercised a cheering and even hallowing influence far and wide, in remote Welsh hamlets, from Northumberland to Devonshire, in the crowded dens of our manufacturing centres, and in lonely seaside villages.

Teach the people to sing, and you will make them happy; teach them to listen to sweet sounds, and you will go far to render them harmless to themselves, if not a blessing to their fellows.

84. LAST APPEARANCES.

Since my ordination I have, with great reluctance, and under considerable pressure from old friends, broken through my rule of never playing in public. Once at St. Peter's, Stepney, where I was curate for a short time, I played at a concert, got up for the edification of the parish, in the school-room.

The people, I think, were too much surprised thoroughly to enjoy me in so completely novel and unexpected a character.

Again, at Saint James the Less, Westminster, at another school-room concert, I played. There I think the feelings of the audience were very mixed. A good many seemed scandalised at a parson playing the fiddle at all. Others were shocked at his performing thus publicly.

When invited by the late lamented MR. SPOTTISWOODE, then President of the Royal Institution, to lecture on "Old Violins" before that learned assembly, I certainly ventured to touch some of the matchless violins lent me on that occasion just sufficiently to illustrate a few points, and demonstrate certain peculiarities of tone. But, although sufficient for the purpose, my hand had lost its cunning, nor shall I ever again play the violin at all to my own liking. Indeed, I keep my Strad. in a cabinet behind glass. There he rests unsounded and unstrung.

Before the end of the century he will probably pass out of my hands. It is well that he should sleep awhile. I have worked him hard enough in my day. About A.D. 1900 he will probably emerge, fresh, powerful, and perhaps sweeter than ever, to tell the unborn generations of the twentieth century how great and magical an artificer was ANTONIUS STRADIVARIUS CREMONENSIS, A.D. 1712.

If these famous old violins did not have these long periods of rest they would soon be all worn out, and A.D. 2000 would

only have them as museum specimens, no longer fit to be played upon. It is the collector who keeps them for years unstrung, and the violinists who lay them by and neither play upon them nor lend them about,—who are the real benefactors and conservers of the Cremona gems. This thought often consoles me when I look at the kind and faithful face of my old violin, or take him out to pass my hand at times caressingly over the dear, familiar maple back, polished and all aglow, like transparent sunlit agate and so finely veined. I look at him as he lies mute in my hands—but not dead. Ah! how he used to sound beneath my bow in the crowded halls and at gay scenes that have faded out for ever with the "days that are no more." Ay! and how he shall sound again in other hands, and sing rapturously to other hearts, long after my hand has grown cold and my heart has ceased to beat.

85. IN PACE.

. . . . .

The pulpit had now fairly taken the place of the violin. Of course I wrote my sermons elaborately, so elaborately that after I had written two I did not quite see my way to writing a third, for the simple reason that I had exhausted the whole range of Christian teaching, practice as well as doctrine, and there did not seem to me to be any more to say. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and I contrived to go on reading sermons at first to an empty church until I felt that something must be done. I had studied audiences in the concert

86. NEW DUTIES.

room. I had never uttered two words in public, but in the Isle of Wight I had been occasionally in the habit of selecting a solitary hillock and addressing the cows in terms of great eloquence on various topics of public interest.

87. THE ORATORICAL AND ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT.

This is not the place to dwell upon my early attempts at extemporary preaching. Suffice it to say that the faculties which make the success of a soloist are temperamentally at least the same as those required by the actor or the orator. Some intellectual power and a special cultivation are of course required in addition, and it is quite as possible to be a good speaker without having an ear for music as it is possible to have an ear for music without being a successful soloist; but it is not possible, without the dramatic intuition and sympathetic temperament, to be a good soloist, actor, speaker, or preacher. I found then that the time I had spent in acquiring the art of dominating an audience in the concert-room had not been wholly wasted. An orator is sometimes said to play upon his audience as upon an old fiddle. The simile is not ill chosen. The special vehicle I had learned to control was indeed lost to me in the Church, but the living spirit, the breathing creatures, the beating hearts I had studied how to move, were the same; and although suffering from a certain incoherency of mind and excessive redundancy of language, I did not despair of success in my new sphere. It seemed to me to be one full of

great possibilities. I was more hopeful then, than I am now about Church reform. I thought the clergy *as a class* more intelligent. I thought more of the old theology could be worked up into a new and living organism than I now see to be possible. I was more hopeful about vital Christianity. I believed in welding together classes on the basis of a common and Christ-like humanity; in raising and purifying the working classes by the presentation, if not of a nobler, at all events of a more practical ideal. As time went on, I found the problem more complex and less soluble.

Then, I was more hopeful about my own powers. I thought that steady industry and perseverance would supply my natural defects of brain and fitfulness of temperament, which were very considerable. Happy imperfection of judgment! happy inconsistency of thought! How many endeavours after the Christian life would never have been made did men stop to count the cost or estimate their own weakness! How many good works would never be begun could the inevitable failures be foreseen! Still the impulse of youthful fervour and inexperience which endures as seeing that which is invisible, is never wholly without fruit, and, after all, seems closely akin to the faith that removes mountains. I would not have had my life at the East End without its illusions or its failures. The first have comforted and the last have humbled me, and both have worked together for good by inspiring me to work for the attainable.

When I had been nearly two years in the Church and went west to St. James the Less, Westminster, as curate, there was very little outward trace of my musical life left. One morning I was reminded that I was still a musician by a letter from the Dean of Canterbury, DEAN ALFORD. He had just become editor of the *Contemporary Review*. He sent me two volumes of MOZART's letters, and asked me for a page or two of notice. With the exception of a little East End sketch called "Amy Arnold," for which I received the modest sum of £2 from a religious Society, this was the first remunerative work that had come the way of my pen. I had got rather disheartened about my writing. The provincial press printed my prose lucubrations, and my poems were often accepted—never paid for. I can see now what shut me out of the magazines. It was the superb magniloquence of my style. "Words! words! words!" *they* killed me. "Amy Arnold" was a simple, unaffected little narrative, with a touch of pathos stealing over the page like the evening sunlight that fell through the dusty casement upon the bed of the dying girl. That real sketch from life was accepted, and I had begun to feel that until I had something to say it was of no use to trifle with war-paint, or strut about in the borrowed plumes of extravagant imagery and flimsy rhetoric.

88. FIRST LITERARY SUCCESSES.

So my pen, with the exception of sermon writing, which I was even then fast abandoning in favour of the spoken word, had lain tolerably idle, and when I opened MOZART's

letters with a beating heart, I resolved to wield what had hitherto been but a goose-quill in sober earnest, and to succeed. That article, which is now to be found in the Biographical Section of *Music and Morals*, at once "placed" my literary faculty in the Dean's estimation. I may say it made my literary fortune.

89. WRITING.

The sudden change from literary failure to success surprised me a little, but the fact is my whole style had suddenly changed. I still could be magniloquent when I chose, but I learned, partly from my pulpit studies and the cultivation of the spoken word, the value of directness and plain speaking, both as a means of expressing thought and winning attention. I began instinctively to choose the short instead of the long words, and then I found that I could bring in the long words and rolling sentences occasionally with all the more crushing effect. Somebody pointed out to me that this habitual temperance and occasional exuberance of language was a leading feature of MILTON'S prose. This encouraged me in chastening my style. I thought I might not be able to imitate MILTON in any other way.

From that day I never have found any difficulty in gaining admission to any magazine that I chose to write for, from the *Quarterly Review* down to the veriest "penny dreadful." The following week the Dean of Canterbury sent me about twenty volumes of all sorts to review for

the *Contemporary*. Amongst these was MR. HOWELL'S *Venetian Life*.

MR. HOWELL was at that time an unknown writer. It was my happiness to discern him at once on this side of the big pond. I believe my review was the first notice that he got in England. I had not read two pages of his book before I experienced the indescribable sensation of something new, characteristic, and charming. Any man, be he painter, poet, essayist, or musician, who can give us that feeling, that distinct breath of novelty, that odour as of brine from the great ocean and fount of creation, lifts himself at once above the herd. He has the incommunicable touch that cannot be taught; the power of making the ever original and personal soul shine through—not as a reflection, a copy, a parody—a soul like any other soul, but the soul of the soul in *him*, the writer—unlike all the world—with a message for the soul of the soul in *me*, the reader, unlike every other reader, discerned, appealed to, found out. That is the precious and prophetic quality which stamps all best art and literature. It comes from the Alone and goes to the Alone; it is the eternal open secret. "I visit the Royal Academy every year," said ALMA TADEMA to me the other day, "and seek for some picture which will give me a new sensation. I can hardly ever find one. I seek in vain. Endless repetition!" This power of giving utterance to the new belongs

90. HOWELL'S "VENETIAN LIFE."

to all genius and places it. Musicians, as well as others, get insensibly classed by this same strength of individuality, which the whole of our modern life in this conventional copy-book world conspires to stifle and stamp out.

Beethoven, Spohr, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Wagner—each is new; does not *try* to be new like your charlatans; cannot help it; does naturally, without effort, without knowing it, what was inconceivable to all men the moment before, what has not been done, could never have been done earlier or by anyone else, or at any other time. Then the school is founded and the aroma of novelty passes. Manufacture sets in. Art gets itself machine-made. None think it possible ever again to create or write or paint otherwise. But Genius, that eternal child, comes by flinging garlands wet with dew, and the scales fall once more from our eyes, and lo! a new heaven and a new earth stand revealed, and the old things have passed away and all things have become new, even as every day is new, born out of the infinite sunlight to fade again into the "azure of the All," whilst "God fulfils Himself in many ways."

91. MUSIC AND MORALS.

Under the Dean of Canterbury's editorial encouragement I wrote essay after essay in rapid succession for the *Contemporary Review*, not always but frequently on music. These articles, together with a few that appeared in *Good Words*, formed the staple of my first book, *Music and Morals*, which appeared in

1871 They were in no sense written to order; several of them had been in my mind for years. At Freshwater, Isle of Wight, during many a lonely ramble, I grappled ineffectually with the problem of musical sound, and the reason why it acted so directly and powerfully upon the life of emotion. In Italy, at Florence, pacing the Cascine by the Arno beneath a network of emerald foliage in spring—in my gondola on the shores of the Lido off Venice —in the southern vineyards at Naples, when all the grapes were gathered and the trailing vines hung yellow and scarlet—in the fig gardens of Genoa, and amid the perfumed orange-groves of the Riviera, all hung with golden fruit yet still breathing with flowers, the same problem haunted me, when at last it seemed to flash suddenly and satisfyingly upon me that Sound was the sovereign art-vehicle of Emotion, *because* it possessed *itself* all the properties of emotion, viz., elation, depression, velocity, &c. Everyone said, how simple! Of course; and yet I am not aware that it had occurred to anyone to point this out before, though many have quietly assumed it since.

These ideas, I say, had long been maturing in my mind, and when I took up my pen in England I established this position in the first part of my book with intense pleasure, and I may say that the whole of *Music and Morals* was written out of a full heart and brain, in which many thoughts had been stored for years without ever having found a congenial outlet in any literary form.

I should in all probability not have thought of issuing, in its present form, a companion volume of collected essays ranging over about twelve years (1871–83), had not various reprints in America, and translations into French and German, warned me that others were not slow to reap where I had strawn. In republishing these pieces, however, I have decided to take the wind out of the pirates' sails, as far as I could, by giving my work a sort of autobiographical setting which none of the pirates could possibly supply. I intend, then, to string my separate beads upon the thread of my own life, in some places supplying certain links of thought which may tend to give my essays a unity of purpose and sustained interest, which they might not otherwise possess.

92. WHY I PRINT MY MUSICAL LIFE.

NOTE.—Anent my old friend VENUA; as this is passing through the press there comes to me news that he died and is buried at Cambridge. The inscription on his tombstone runs thus :—

Dieu lui fasse paix.
Monsieur
Jean Guillaume Robert Réné Venua,
An accomplished musician.
Born in Paris 1787.
Departed this life,
4th December 1868,
Aged 81.
"I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Second Book.

BY THE GOLDEN SEA.

Second Book.

BY THE GOLDEN SEA.

I.

Interlude

ON RECURRENT IDEAS.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE once said, "People sometimes tell me that I repeat myself—they apparently wish to hear something new every time they come to my church, or read a new book of mine—but," he added, "I never professed to teach or write new things—I never had but one or two things that I was anxious to say—and I have been saying them over and over again for thirty years." Everyone has not the courage to speak like this; but all teaching that is not merely heterogeneous and eclectic (a

93. A SENTENCE BY MAURICE.

sort of teaching, by the way, for which MAURICE had a deep contempt) deals with a few master thoughts—what WAGNER would call "Leitmotiven." Evolution rules DARWIN. An intense faith in the moral and Spiritual Constitution of the world rules TENNYSON. A reverent Pessimism pervades the works of GEORGE ELIOT, an equally reverent Optimism characterises EMERSON. When the ferment of creative and imaginative sensibility subsides, all thoughtful minds have a tendency to settle into grooves marked out by idiosyncrasy, temperament, quality of brain tissue, heredity, and sometimes social environment.

94. MIND-BIAS.

No class of writers better illustrate this than historians. HALLAM is impersonal; JOHN RICHARD GREEN, personal; one will construe history, like BUCKLE, through the colourless lens of inexorable and pitiless law, and see historical movements making men; another, like CARLYLE, will let the human element count for much, and see men making historical movements; whilst a third, like MACAULAY, will recognise the personal and impersonal power in history, and warp both a little with party politics.

Those who expect to take up *My Musical Life* and find in it nothing but novelty, may be disappointed to light upon more than once something which recalls *Music and Morals*; yet all I have ever aspired to is to "sing to one clear harp in divers tones," the few clear and strong and

sweet and happy things that have been revealed to me through music.

My thoughts on music are recurrent thoughts. The same beam of light rests upon many a ripple. But thoughts will sometimes bear re-statement. When a thought is new it is often a little confused, yet is there a certain force and radiance in the very confusion. The haze of sunrise—the "wild freshness of morning"—is at once the first and the last memory that abides with us. The old man forgets the crowded and dusty thoroughfares of middle life and babbles of green fields.

95. ROOT THOUGHTS.

The two thoughts which lie at the root of all my musical as of all my religious thinking are: 1st. THE TREMENDOUS EMPIRE OF THE SENSES, by which I mean the spell of the beautiful world without us, its colour, light, loveliness, its gracious, radiant, and tender women; its happy innocent children; its generous, ingenious, and indomitable men; its tragedies and comedies; "all the wealth and all the woe"; its hints of an imperishable universe, 'unseen though felt, o'ershadowing us'; its silent finger pointing to the sky; all this I view with 'reverence and good heed,' and without satiety. Life to me is from quite an external point of view, with all its sin and sorrow, infinitely worth living.

. . . . .

Never to lose the eager spirit; to keep the heart eternally

young; to stand always at the open gates of Paradise; to listen to 'the lordly music flowing from the illimitable years!' This is my desire. But 'tis a world of time, and of things seen and temporal, after all—*altiora peto.*

So that other thought is never long absent. THE IMMENSE SUPREMACY OF THE SOUL! In darkness and tears, in pain and loss, in the failure of hope, in the shame of remorse, when all things in heaven and earth seem unstable —I am aware of a secret life, a consciousness independent of time and chance. This revives my spirit; this soothes me with a sense of the infinite.

. . . . .

Alone, with closed eyes, the royal visions pass. Angelic faces are with me in the twilight, voices that cannot be heard, touches that cannot be felt, and suddenly a summer land within breaks forth when all is dark without. I perceive that man does not live by bread alone. The outer world is the dream, the inner life is the reality. I carry it everywhere with me. I thought the visible universe was all in all. I perceive it to be as nothing in comparison with the soul that sits enthroned above it. It is *that* which makes the poor man royal and beggars the king. What wealth have you within, not what will men and women give you; *what*, not *where*, are you. Does not each one carry within himself the riches and the poverty of a world? and is there not a life within a life? This is THE SOLITARY SUPREMACY OF THE SOUL.

Musical sound fascinated me early as the refined physical medium on the very border-land of spirit, which, when directly excited, dealt with and controlled the springs of this mysterious inner life of feeling—this region of emotion which gives the spirit its solitary supremacy, and colours or discolours at will all the objects of sense. The Editor of the *Quarterly Review* invited me to explain my views upon the subject. I repeated in a succinct form what I had said in my book, *Music and Morals*. The London Institution asked me to lecture on the same subject. I had by this time completely possessed my thought and I became aware of my increased facility in handling it. With the aid of a piece of chalk and a black-board I there attempted to convey to a mixed audience what at one time I should have despaired of expressing without the aid of musical sound or elaborate diagrams. The *Quarterly* article (vol. 131, No. xxxvi) I do not intend to reprint; but the words I spoke at Finsbury Circus, although going over some ground familiar to the readers of my first volume, seem to me to resume briefly my Recurrent Thoughts on the Rationale of Music, and its place amongst the Arts, and will, I think, be found acceptable as an introduction to the meditations contained in Book II. of this volume.

96. A RETROSPECT.

II.

THE RATIONALE OF MUSIC.

To discuss music without the aid of instruments, notes, or diagrams, is not an easy and would be an impossible thing, were I mainly dealing with its science, history, or performance. But it is with the general philosophy and *rationale* of the art that I am now concerned. Music has come in for its full share of science, history, and criticism; but how few have dived into its essence, and instead of seeking for the inevitable "how," asked after the eternal "why"!

97. THE ETERNAL WHY?

I have always held that music should be discussed and written about just like any other art. The musical criticisms of the day deal chiefly in technicality and personality, and it is rather unfortunate that the few writers who occasionally venture out into the deep, and discourse on music *per se*, are deficient in the one thing needful—"musical perception"; in that ocean they cannot swim, and the sooner some of them get to shore the better. Music has its Morals, its right and its wrong, its high and its low, like any other art; and until people can be got to understand how this *can* be, and why it *must* be, music will never assert its dignity among the arts and receive its dues. Before Mr. Ruskin wrote, people thought

98. HOW TO DISCUSS MUSIC.

that there was no right or wrong about painting, sculpture, and architecture, and musical criticism has been in the same Slough of Despond. And what is the consequence? Painting and sculpture rank above music, yet music, not painting, not sculpture, is *the* modern art. Who shall be found to do for the new art of music what Mr. Ruskin has done for painting and architecture—to create for it a moral philosophy as well as a *rationale*? I need not say that in *Music and Morals* I have tried to show how this might be done, and I have been much gratified to observe that writers who are apt to treat my opinions as common, when not wrong, and as wrong when not common, have not always been deterred from the not uncommon practice of appropriating them without acknowledgment.

I now glance briefly: I. At the development of music out of the rough elements of sound.

II. At its place amongst the sister arts and its peculiar functions.

III. At the obvious nature of its influence.

Music, its origin, function, and influence—that is my subject.

ROUGH ELEMENTS OF SOUND.

99. We now enter at once into the world of mystery and imagination: of mystery because, though you know how a sound can be produced, you do not know why it produces its effect on you; of imagination, since I must ask you to recall as you read, by

way of illustration, the most beautiful sounds you have ever heard. But sounds of less agreeable nature have first to be realised. Before we enter the temple of music or penetrate its inner shrine, we find ourselves distracted with the rough elements of sound, the rabble of noise outside—how out of such elements shall we ever collect the "choirs that chime after the chiming of the eternal spheres"?

We have Sound in the world around us of every conceivable kind. Listen to the distant roar of a great populous city. Its cry goes up by day and night. Myriad voices ascend from sea and land. If you notice the waves as they drag down the shingles on the beach, in their retiring scream they give forth a series of semitones; and there is a rough and elemental sort of musical sound in the moaning of the wind, which has supplied poets with allusions more sentimental than accurate; still the wind's harp does go up and down, like the mooing of a cow. And doubtless the rough inflexions of the human voice existed long before music became an art. As the voice rises and falls you have a scale of emotional inflexion which gives it full force; for it is the sound quite as much as the words used which yields the impression of what is passing in your mind. But even here we have not arrived at musical sound, we have only touched some materials of it. How shall we get at musical sound? Or, in other words, what is the difference between a Noise and a musical Note? A noise is only understood when the nature of a musical note is understood. Roughly

speaking, a musical note means a "clang," to use HELMHOLTZ's word, in which there is one fundamental tone, and along with it the third, fifth, and octave as buried tones. When the fundamental is strong, and the hidden tones, the third, fifth, and octave, &c., very faint, you get the impression of one musical note which is invariably the fundamental tone. There are many hidden mysteries in a fundamental tone, a greater or less variety of overtones, varying according to your sound-quality. I have had occasion to dwell more scientifically upon this in my chapter on "Bells."

Now, what makes noise as opposed to a musical note is just this. You get the third, fifth, and the octave, or some other overtones, louder than the fundamental note. To illustrate this summarily, we might compare the notes of a violin or a fine bell with a Chinese gong; or you may strike a coal-scuttle, or a warming-pan, and produce an equally satisfactory result. A gong is, however, perhaps the best type of noise—I do not allude to those smooth Japanese metal plates, or bars, which often give one or more very sweet tones, but those horrible gongs, dented all over, that you thump with a drum-stick, beginning *pp.* and ending with a purgatorial crescendo in *ff.* This, I say, is noise, and most of the sounds which fall upon the ear are noise, especially what we hear "whene'er we take our walks abroad" in the streets of London.

100. NOISE.

When, then, we have found a clear fundamental tone, with its accompanying fainter overtones, we have found a musical note. Now analyze this musical note. It can vary in three ways, and in three ways only. When you know how it so varies you know all that can be known about it. A musical note, then, can vary in pitch, in intensity, and in quality or *timbre*.

101. MUSICAL TONE.

1. What makes the pitch of a note? It depends upon the rapidity of the vibrations. Supposing you take as an illustration the sound given by a note of an harmonium, which is caused by the vibration of a metal tongue. When this tongue vibrates slowly, or only a few times backwards and forwards in a second, you get a note of a deep pitch; but when it vibrates at the rate of 67,000 vibrations to the note, the pitch is so shrill that although some cats may hear it, no human beings can. The ear of the cat is finer than ours. Cats and some birds are microphones compared to man; they see sights we cannot see, they smell smells we very fortunately cannot smell, and they hear sounds which we cannot hear. A note is high or low in pitch, according as the number of vibrations which produce it are in a given time few or many, fast or slow.

2. What makes its intensity? It is the length of the vibration waves that determines their loudness or intensity. If the wave or the extent of "excursion" of the vibrating molecules be large, the shape of the wave being the same

the sound is loud; if the reverse, the shape being the same, the sound is faint.

3. What determines the quality? The quality depends on the *mode* of vibration. It is, as HELMHOLTZ has shown, the number, order, and intensity of the vibrations of the overtones in a "clang" which determines timbre or quality, and which makes the differences between the same note sounded on a violin, piano, harp, flute, &c.

102. BIRTH OF MUSIC.

But even now we have only arrived at the composition of musical notes, not at the composition of music. How then did music arise? Of course the human ear has always been open to sweet and disagreeable sounds, and has gradually been led to choose between them. I do not want to quarrel with the mythical notion that some pristine man or woman, wandering on the sea-shore, may have found a shell with seaweed stretched like strings across it, out of which the wind was making an Æolian harp, and that so the first idea of the harp may have arisen. This may have happened, for aught we know. The creating of artificial notes for mere pleasure seems to have been a custom from time immemorial.

Bones of extinct mammals have been found made into flutes. At least M. Lartêt says so. What he found looked like a flute to him, and far be it from me to bring art into collision with science by saying it does not look like a flute. I think, on the whole, it does; and, if so, this may

be another proof that primitive man delighted in sweet sounds. But we are still far from the art of music. Here are witnesses to an ancient impulse in the direction of an art, but not the art itself.

We may as well skip Egypt and Assyria, and assume that the musical survival of the fittest remained, after the extinction of those empires,—with Greece. However, we need not pause long even in Greece; for, although the Greeks had many modes or scales, as they never discovered the natural advantages of the octave completed by the eighth note, their musical art could not progress.

It is useless for pedants to prose about the emotional advantages and special musical character of the Dorian, Lydian, or Phrygian modes—as if we had lost, or could lose, anything by adopting our system of fixed tonality; for once get *that* and you can obviously write in any mode, and give your key any special character you like; and the proof of this is that BERLIOZ has used the proud Hypodorian mode in the second part of "Christ's Infancy." Saint-Saens opens the "Noces de Prométhée" with it. GOUNOD uses it in *Faust* for the "Roi de Thule." The Hypophrygian mode colours the close of *William Tell*, act ii. (ROSSINI); and we might multiply instances—but the Greeks could never have written *Faust* or *William Tell*, as will presently appear.

The fact is, that in Greece musical sound was auxiliary to the exercise of the dance, the ceremony of the feast, the

discipline of the arena, or the voice of the orator; it accompanied chanting, and most people are agreed that harmony, in our sense of the word, was at that time unknown. The Greek system, like some others in the realms of theology, philosophy, and science, was elaborate but sterile, and so Greece handed her traditions on to Rome, and still no progress was made, because music, like all other arts, had to bide her time. Her Muse is essentially the dear possession of the modern world; she lives and moves and finds free development and expansion in our atmosphere alone; and this is what makes her so absorbing and fascinating, and *entitles* her, now that she has reached her glorious maturity, to rank above the other arts. I say that Music is essentially the Modern Art, although her mystic treasures lay buried for centuries in the womb of Time.

So all things have their supreme moment; so electricity slept in the amber, and was known to the Greek six hundred years before Christ, but was only wedded to applied science in the laboratory of the nineteenth century. Every ancient who boiled a kettle must have observed the rush of steam from its spout, but it remained for Watt and Stephenson to adapt it to commerce, manufacture, and transport. And all arts have fared the same. Like spirits in the vasty deep, they wait for their special call. That call is always the same. *It is the deep need of an Age.*

What need has human life of art? What is art? Art

is, like Sensation, one and indivisible in its essence; but,

EXPRESSION THE IMPERATIVE MOOD.

103. like Sensation, it is manifold in its channels of expression. It captures in different forms and runs through the five senses. Expression is the imperative mood of our nature: without it we wither and pine; with it we grow, we develop, we soar. Man is essentially a dramatic animal: he is ever seeking to make known what is in him; he aspires to the true possession of himself. Life becomes more rich when it passes into word and action. Every moment in proportion as we are truly alive we are longing to manifest ourselves as we can. We are not satisfied till someone else enjoys what we enjoy, knows what we know, feels what we feel, and the great burden-lifters of humanity are those who have told us the things we knew already, but which we could not express for ourselves. These are "the souls that have made our souls wiser." These are the prophets and the poets and the artists, dear, kindred, world-embracing spirits that give humanity back to itself, and make it doubly worth having by bestowing upon it those memorable and entrancing gifts of expression that "on the stretched forefinger of Time sparkle for ever."

ART RELIEVES FEELING.

104. And do you not feel this as you stand before any great work of art—the "Madonna di San Sisto," at Dresden, the "Transfiguration" at Rome? Do you not feel—"Here is one who has painted my

inexpressible thoughts—here before me are the Divine figures I have seen in my dreams"? When you hear the *Elijah* do you not stand in the cleft of the rock with the prophet, and veil your face as the whirlwind sweeps by, and amid the crash of the thunder and rending of the rocks, you perceive that the Lord is not in the tempest, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but at last in the still small voice? And upon you has not this had a great and hallowing effect? Has not music taken your own turbulent emotions, and expressed them for you in the storm, leaving you sublimely elevated and yet sublimely calm at the close? Such will indeed appear to be the special function of musical art. But I must not anticipate.

105. THE DAY AND THE HOUR.

I said each art has to bide its time. When a man appears before his time he has to stand down, and another takes up his message later on. And so it is with art. There is affinity between an Age and an Art; let music come up before its time, another art, Sculpture, will elbow it out, and each growth will be rapid in due season, like that of seeds. Sculpture, Architecture, Painting, Music, all follow the same law. Look at sculpture in Greece from AGELADES and PHIDIAS to PRAXITELES and LYSIPPUS, a brief one hundred and fifty years—the art reached its culmination, then dropped, like a flower shedding its petals, throughout the Isles of Greece. It was the same with the Greek drama, with Gothic Architec-

cure in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with Italian painting in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; and Music, from HANDEL to WAGNER, is following a similar course; for I think the future history of Music must be in its combination with the other arts, and its adaptation in higher complexity to the ever-restless needs of human emotion.

Now observe the grand fundamental law of art succession. Each art comes as the angelic response to some cry of deep developmental need, and it embodies the ideal tendencies of a whole epoch. Thus, Sculpture was the art of the Greeks because they knew nothing higher than the beauty and symmetry of the human body; that was the climax of their adoring souls, and it came forth in the beautiful, graceful, and sublime forms of Venus, Apollo, and Jove. We pass over Roman art, for that was either done by Greeks in Rome or was simply a pale, too often a mechanical, development of Greek art. We also pass over the early Christian art, for the early Christians looked askance at art, and yet were subdued by it, for they were forced at last to weave the heathen symbols—legends of Maia and Orpheus—into their sepulchral frescoes. We come later on to the extinction of almost all sensibility in art, through Byzantine forms—in fact, to the year 814, the time of CHARLEMAGNE—a time when the people of Europe were so busily engaged in slaughtering one another that, of course, there was little to be expected in the

106. RISE, PROGRESS, AND DECAY.

way of art, which requires for its elaboration a certain amount of peace and leisure.

But the great human needs are ever silently developing, and by-and-by another art arose, that of Gothic Architecture. This became a grand medium for expressing the new thoughts and feelings of the people, the awe, the worship, the grandeur, and, above all, the human interests of the new Christianity now spreading rapidly, like some fertile and invincible creeper, over the ruined fragments of the prostrate Roman columns—the foundation-stones of the modern world. Mr. Ruskin has told us how the old monks built their very lives, and along with them the hearts of the people, into those noble cathedrals which are dotted over all Christian lands, and remain the pride and boast of the civilized world. He has made us feel how the recluse must have revelled in his cell as he gazed upon the stone which he was ready to carve, or intrust to the itinerant mason; how he paced his cloister and dreamed of the execution of those ideas which he had perhaps long cherished, until by degrees his imagination moulded the very life of the period, its activity, its coarseness, its humour, as well as its devotion, into sculptured capital and gargoyle.

The efflorescent and flamboyant wildness of design marked at length the extreme limits of the stone art. The too fitful, fanciful impatience or despair succeeded loss of healthy perception, loss of interest, of reason, of law, and Gothic architecture became worse than dead—degraded. But the stone

art only fell when its powers as an expressional medium were exhausted.

Art now turned the stonemason's chisel into the painter's brush; rapidly through the schools of Venice, Florence, and Rome, were the foundations of the art laid, the discovery of perspective, anatomy, and colour. The noble edifice rose from GIOTTO to RAPHAEL only to exhaust in its turn, and in a comparatively short time, the new, more plastic, more pathetic vehicle of colour, and turn restlessly to seek and to find another medium.

107. MUSIC LATEST BORN.

What was that other latest-born minister of expression, eager to seize the torch as it fell from the painter's trembling hands. It was MUSIC. She offered herself a new emotional medium fitted to express what neither Sculpture, Architecture, nor Painting could express, the mystic and complex emotions of that hidden life made up of self-analysis, sensibility, love, prayer, trance, vision, ecstasy, which Christianity brought into the world, and which gave to the human soul that inner and intense quality of spiritual independence which must henceforth stamp and qualify all human progress. It is impossible to deny that more secular elements entered into the formation of the modern spirit, although its inwardness was its chief characteristic.

Great geographical discoveries, New Worlds, Australia America, and the remote East; great commercial activities,

great inventions, the printing press, steam navigation, and the electric telegraph; great religious movements, great revolutions, the rise of the English Reformation, the translation of the Bible; many things combined to produce the unparalleled activity of the modern spirit. But amongst all these factors Christianity was paramount; it explored and sifted emotion as it had never been explored and sifted before; it set free the springs of the inner life, and taught men the sublime secret of an independent emotional consciousness, before which the outer world vanished into space, whilst the changes, the rise and fall, and subtle sequences of mental states became the only realities.

108. SECRET OF MUSIC.

But the hunger of art could not long be evaded. These very states called aloud for expression; they were elaborated in the silence of the cloister, and it was thence that music stept forth into the world, as the new art medium. Now, as I have elsewhere pointed out at some length, music possesses two qualities *combined* by no other art: first, the quality of velocity—it *moves*; and secondly, the quality of direct appeal—it stirs feelings without having recourse to ideas or images. The drama, indeed, has movement, but it only stirs emotion through ideas; painting stirs us by the ideas presented and the direct emotional impact of colour, but it has no *velocity*; that has to be supplied by imagination. You may ally music with anything you please, but it alone can deal

first-hand with emotion, arouse it, control it, direct it, and follow its chameleon life through all its innumerable windings.

This, the secret of music, once stated, is stated for ever; it is revealed in two words, *Directness* and *Velocity*.

And now, having shown the place of music amongst the arts, I should naturally proceed to trace the history of Modern Music through what Mr. Hullah has termed its three periods. We must be satisfied here with but one glimpse. First period, A.D. 370 to 1400. Ambrose (374) selected certain of the Greek modes for chants. Gregory (590) revived the forgotten work of the good Milanese bishop, and added four new scales. Then came Huchbald of Tournay (932), who introduced a sort of harmony which must have resembled the mixture stop of the organ. Guido (1020) of Arezzo, and Franco of Cologne (1200), who between them divide the honours of descant, *cantus mensurabilis*, or division into bars, and flats and sharps, together with the invention of the monochord.

109. PERIODS OF MODERN MUSIC.

In the second period, 1400 to 1600, we have Josquin des Pres in Belgium, and Palestrina in Italy, and the rise of a true system of tonality; and when we enter the third period, 1600 to 1750, we have reached the true octave; the major and minor scale in which we find the uniform arrangement of semitones and the perfect cadence, ascribed by some to

MONTE VERDE 1590. When this moment arrived, the basis of a sound musical development was reached, and modern music then first became possible. The science of the cloister had at last stepped forth to wed, to train and discipline the wild, untutored art of the world outside.

Rapid and sudden, like the burst of Greek sculpture or Italian painting, was the rise and progress of modern music, the instant the science of the Church touched the heart of the World.

CARISSIMI died 1672; he was the type of the transition period. He might have seen PALESTRINA, and he lived to hear CORELLI. In CORELLI'S life-time the germ of every style of music since known arose. He witnessed the singing schools of Naples in the south, the rise of the great violin schools in the north, the foundation of the oratorio in Rome, the progress of instrumental music throughout Italy, France, and England. All this took place in the last century, and we are struck with a certain awe when we remember that men are still (1883) alive who may have listened to MOZART (died 1791), and conversed with the venerable HAYDN (died 1808). (See *Music and Morals.*)

110. MUSIC AND EMOTION.

I return from this by no means irrelevant digression to illustrate the functions by completing the analysis of music, *as the direct language of the emotions.* Have you ever analysed your thoughts and feelings? Some say it is an unhealthy practice, but that quite

depends; and if it is used for a legitimate purpose, it is interesting to observe what is going on in the realm of emotion. Every moment is occupied by some feeling—good, bad, or indifferent. You are very seldom neutral, and when you are, it is worthy of being noted as a fixed point from which to measure the "excursional" extent of your emotion.

If I now repeat my analysis of the properties of emotion, and then refer it to those of sound, as manipulated by music, we shall find that precisely the same qualities which exist *inwardly* in emotion, exist *outwardly* in sound. And that is the reason why music is fitted to be, and is recognised as, the language of emotion. I pointed this out in *Music and Morals*, and when it was pointed out it seemed very simple.

111. NEW ILLUSTRATIONS.

Emotion, then, consists first of *elation* and *depression*; that is, it goes up and down like a wavy line. When a lecturer addresses an audience, the interest may go down lower and lower; then, perhaps, he says something which tickles the fancy, and the emotion goes up and up, his hearers' hopes are raised, and they say to themselves, "Oh, it 's not going to be so dull, after all." Here, then, is an instance of depression followed by elation.

The next quality is *intensity*. Your emotion varies in intensity. You grow intense and earnest as you listen

to a speaker who interests you, until perhaps you are quite, as you say, carried away, or entranced by his eloquence.

Then your emotion has *variety*. We may illustrate this. A man is sitting on a foggy day in his parlour, when a friend suddenly drops in. He is glad to see him, and out of depression he begins to rise into elation. And then comes a story of the hunting field, a well-known wall had to be cleared, and someone was thrown; and as he listens with more and more interest, he finds the climax to be that the narrator himself was the man who was thrown, and that he has come on this depressing day to see him partly on that account. Then other friends drop in, and you ring for cigars and wine. You are informed there are no cigars, and your emotion is now divided by the story, the cigars, the servant, and your friends; you are the subject of a great variety of simultaneous emotions, some not over-pleasurable, but, at any rate, there is variety.

Then, fourthly, emotion has a *kind of form*—you may give it an arbitrary form; you can represent its direction by lines curved according to elation or depression, thick or thin according to intensity, and you can bracket them together to show that they are simultaneous. (Vide *Music and Morals.*)

Lastly, emotion possesses *velocity*; it travels, and it is never quite at rest; you may call its velocity x.

Now pass to musical sound. The notes in a musical scale

go up and down; they have *elation* and *depression*, may vary in loudness from *pp.* to *ff.*, from *crescendo* to *diminuendo*, and so they have *intensities*. Many lines of melody and harmony can be carried on simultaneously, as in a part song or a score of Wagner's; there is then no mistake about *variety*. Then music has *form*. Musical form is as much a recognised musical phrase as "nicely-felt colour" is in painting, and it is more to the point, for we have but to cast our eyes over a score of SPOHR or BEETHOVEN, and compare it with one of HANDEL'S, to see how widely different is the general form even to the eye. Lastly, from *adagio* to *presto* you have reached in music that crowning property of emotion, *velocity*, for music is never at rest.

Side by side, then, we place, after five-fold analysis, emotion and music, the thing to be *expressed* and the thing which *expresses* it. In passing from one to the other we have simply exchanged certain arbitrary lines and an x for a set of symbols capable of bringing the various properties of emotion into connection with sound. That set of symbols, so long in arriving, so glorious in its advent, is obviously modern Musical Notation, and in wedding that to sound we have reached at last the sovereign and direct medium of emotional expression in THE ART OF MODERN MUSIC.

And now if it be asked, "What is the use of music?"

I may ask in return, "What is the use of emotion?"

112. USE OF MUSIC.

It colours all life, it inspires all words, it nerves for all action. What would your life be without it? And what is the grandest thought without it? You know you may repeat a grand passage of SHAKESPEARE without emotion. The noblest passages in the Bible are often read aloud without kindling a thrill or quickening a pulse. But apply the heat of noble dramatic action or impassioned religious eloquence, and how changed is the leaden atmosphere! how living and pregnant is the thought! Music expresses no thoughts, stands for no ideas or intellectual conceptions, rouses (except by association) no images; but it stands for independent states of consciousness, it creates the atmosphere in which thoughts are born, it deals with the mystic states in which thought is steeped and coloured.

Without emotion thought would perish, or remain passive and inert. No age, no sentient creature has been quite without a sense of musical sound as the language of emotion. In its rude elements even dumb animals are affected by it. It influences dogs, horses, and cattle generally. Notice how a musical sound, though monotonous, is understood and obeyed, and how the jingle of bells notoriously encourages horses to perform their work. The plough-boy is inspirited by the strains of his own whistling. And do you wonder that the Spartans were enabled to march to victory inspired by the lays of the minstrel TYRTÆUS—that our soldiers

require the fife and drum? And I have been told a thing at which I have much wondered, that there are people in the North who are very delighted and cheered by that monotonous instrument of torture, the Scotch bagpipe.

113. SONGS OF THE TEMPLE.

I must not trust myself to dwell upon the religious functions of music—active, as in the Lutheran hymn, sung *by* the people; passive, as in the mass or Catholic anthem, sung *for* the people. The songs of the temple have had more attention paid them than the songs of the street; but the time will come when these, too, will be understood as important factors in the life and morality of the people.

114. SONGS OF THE STREET.

A great statesman has said, "Let me make the songs of the people, and let who will make their laws." And when we think what might be the influence of music we cannot but regret that the popular songs of England are, in fact, represented by "Tommy, make room for your uncle." The songs of our music halls kindle emotions truly, but of what kind are they? When you employ music, wed it to thought, and thus awaken emotions, you must remember you are playing with two-edged tools, for the emotions kindled and directed may be such as it is unhealthy and mischievous to cherish. Emotion means fire, and a heap of live coals on your carpet and in your grate subserve very different purposes;

for in the one case your house is warmed, and in the other case it is burned down. So it is with music, which kindles and directs emotion. Music under certain conditions elevates, while under certain other conditions it demoralises. Music ought to be used discreetly, advisedly, and soberly, and that is why the particular *kind* of music we adopt, and the words to which music is set, should be very carefully considered.

115. MUSIC MEANS MORALS.

Music is not intended simply to tickle the ear; music means Morals. And here let me remind you that not half enough has been said of the discipline of emotion, a function exercised in the highest degree by music. Upon this very quality of discipline, nobility, and truth of emotional expression, turns the distinction between the modern German and the modern Italian schools, as schools. I say modern Italian, because the old Church schools of Pergolese and Stradella were severe, beautiful, and sublime compared to the modern Italian opera and romance. Yet must we not deny the splendid melodic and even harmonic qualities which are to be found in the essentially false form and spirit of the Italian opera. It has been too much the fashion of the English Wagnerites to decry Italian music; but the German Wagnerite is more liberal and catholic in his appreciation, while WAGNER himself was the most liberal and truly catholic musician of them all. He could appreciate

every kind of music, and so can those who interpret him best.

116. RICHTER ON BELLINI.

I remember, when I was at Nuremberg, falling in with RICHTER, then conductor of the Bayreuth Festival. We were seated in the parlour of a little old-fashioned German inn, discussing the various schools of music, when I happened to allude to a famous quartet in VERDI'S *Rigoletto*, and to BELLINI'S *Norma*, whereupon RICHTER, the great Wagner disciple—RICHTER, the conductor of the Bayreuth Festival, the incarnation of the music of the future, sprang up, and lifting high his glass, in honour of the great Italian, exclaimed, "Ach, der Bellini—ist ein ganz colossaler Kerl!"

117. REFINING DISCIPLINE.

To resume. The secret of a good school of music is, that it is a real exponent and a sound discipliner of the emotions. Listening to a symphony or sonata of BEETHOVEN'S is not a joke: it is a study, an emotional training. You sit down and listen attentively, and the master leads you through various moods; he elates you and depresses you; your feeling waxes and wanes with various intensities, not spasmodically, but by coherent sequences. You are put through a whole system of feeling, not of your own choosing; you are not allowed to choose, you are to control yourself here and expand there; and at last, after due exercise, you are

landed on the composer's own platform, disciplined, refreshed, and elevated. Although urged here and there, the light rein has been upon you, and the master drives you much in the same way that a skilled charioteer drives a spirited steed.

This is the process of all really great music, and the reason why the Italian, as a school, and, indeed, *all* bad music, Italian or otherwise, is injurious is because it deals *unfairly* or untruly with your emotions. It does not give you a balanced, rational, or healthful sequence of feeling. It is like a picture the effect of which is spoilt by a washy background of raw colour, or like a melodrama such as *The Bells*, which, without any reflection on MR. IRVING'S fine acting, we may, however, call a very good melodrama, but of a bad art sort. It is unlike a play of SHAKESPEARE'S. If he has horrors to bring before you, he prepares you for them; you are not trifled with and exhausted, your emotions are not whipped and spurred until they almost cease to respond. All bad art trifles with, exhausts, and enervates you; and music most of all, because it deals at first hand with the emotions.

AN ENGLISH SCHOOL OF MUSIC.

118. I look for a great popular development of musical art in England. You know very well that "the English are not a musical people." They may cultivate music, they like it and pay for it, but they do not produce anything to be compared with the works of the

great masters on the Continent. The national music is about "Champagne Charley," "Tommy," "Waking the Baby," "Grandfather's Clock," and "Over the Garden Wall." It is true we have Sir Arthur Sullivan, whose compositions are always welcome; but he studied in Germany, he took the Mendelssohn scholarship at Leipsic, and therefore he may be considered, so far as music is concerned, a German to the backbone; it can scarcely be said of him, from a musical point of view, that, "in spite of all temptations to belong to other nations, he remained an Englishman."

But in the last forty years the progress of music in England has been very great. Mr. Hullah told me that when he began to examine schools he found children who could not sing two or three consecutive notes in tune; but that now, very greatly through Mr. Hullah's own work, this state of things is altered, and he says that if you go through the length and breadth of the land, you will find that the national ear has been to a great extent cultivated. But we must not stop here; the national art must be improved, and then the national taste, and, above all, the education of the nation, as a whole, in music.

BOARD SCHOOL MUSIC.

119. I should like to see someone who should be responsible for conducting the musical performances of our children. Nothing is more striking in our Board Schools than the admirable management of every other department of instruction, and the muddle,

looseness, uncertainty, and general inefficiency of the musical instruction. Sound, popular music, songs, and part singing, at sight as well as by ear, should radiate from the Board Schools. I desire to see cheap sheets of music placed in the hands of the children, which they may take to their homes, and so learn the art of singing part songs, as they do in Amsterdam, and, indeed, in Holland generally. Even in Switzerland there is a certain coherent musical part "yodelling," at any rate superior to the "He's a jolly good fellow" style of chorus affected at our own convivial assemblies.

Let the heaven-born art of music spread; let it bless the homes and hearths of the people; let the children sing, and sing together; let the concertina, the violin, or the flute be found in every cottage; let not the only fiddle in the place be hung up in the beer-shop, the only choruses in the village be heard in the choir and at the public-house. And while music refines pleasure, let it stimulate work. Let part songs and sweet melody rise in all our crowded factories above the whirl of wheels and clanking of machinery; thus let the factory girl forget her toil and the artisan his grievance, and Music, the Civiliser, the Recreator, the Soother and Purifier of the emotions, shall become the music of the future for England.

III.

Interlude

ON SENSE CHANNELS.

The soul is one, simple, indivisible. The senses are five, through these the inward and spiritual converses with the outward and visible. In some higher state, Goethe imagined we might perceive, without having recourse to these five ministers; to be in each other's presence might suffice to place souls in perfect and intimate communion, without speech, or touch, or sight, or sound. When dealing with one sense, I am aware of limitation and imperfection; it gives me what it can of perception—and no more. I must eke out its message by another—to complete sight I must resort to touch; but I soon find 'tis but half a world without sound. Insatiable is the soul until perception flows in through all the senses. Wagner felt this when he insisted upon the arts being united, thus instructing the soul fully, by a simultaneous appeal, in which that which could not be conveyed by one channel came in through another.

120. UNITY OF SENSE.

Something of this kind I happened to say in a sermon one night, and the next day I received an anonymous MS.

in which the sense of hearing was discussed in several desultory paragraphs, full of ingenuity and, I must add, of technical knowledge. The anonymous author will, perhaps, pardon me for making use of his ideas here. These remarks interested me for several reasons: first, because they were thoughtful and suggestive; secondly, because they teemed with accurate information; thirdly, because the argument from design, now habitually set aside, is unexpectedly endorsed from a scientific platform; and lastly, because the description of the ear from a musical standpoint very fitly led up to the meditations which I am about to offer to my reader on hearing music.

121
AN ANONYMOUS MS.

My unknown correspondent began by pointing out that the human ear was the most perfect conceivable mechanism for the reception and transmission of musical sounds. He added, on what authority I know not, that as regards structural aggregation of elements, this has been so since the creation of the world; no alterations under the influences of time are supposed to have occurred. The progressive evolution of music has not been accompanied by any synchronous changes in the acoustic apparatus of the human ear. Yet in the human ear we find provisions for the differentiation of noises and musical notes, from the canon's crash to the one sixty-fourth of a musical tone—the former (probably) in the labyrinth, the latter in the fibres of Corti, ($33\frac{1}{3}$ to each semitone). We

122.
THE HUMAN EAR.

have sympathetically vibrating membranes and strings of varying tension, capable of answering to an almost infinite variety of fundamental tones, discriminating their pitch; we even have dampers, to arrest vibrations.

Again, in the human ear we have had from all time a telephonic membrane (the tympanum) capable of transmitting 4,000 vibrations a second to the central electro-magnetic medium (or brain) of the human telegraphic system of nerves and branch offices, in which the sensations arising from the perception of sound are generated and reflected.

As in the case of colour and the differentiation of various spectrum rays, presumably dependent upon the heat, velocity, and angle of refraction of the ray as it strikes the retinal elements, so in musical variety of tones, an *educational* evolution must have been at work in the recognition and discrimination of sound waves and vibrations of varying length and intensity. But this involves *no* necessary change in physical conformation, retinal or auditory, only a functional development necessitated by the ever-increasing demands of sound. Mr. Gladstone has attempted to show the ignorance of the ancients of the colour *red*, how many changes in the retinal power of differentiating and answering to the creative genius of man, exercised through the accidental discoveries of the chemical art, have occurred since the Homeric age? Take all our modern varieties of colour:—

How must certain ages of colour-training influence

the retina in its actual or progressive functional development?

Similarly, how largely must certain periods of musical genius, with their correlative expressions, in contemporaneous musical compositions, have affected the functional powers of the acoustic elements in the ear and the hearing brain centre in which lay the latent capacities for their reception?

The style, even when clipped, is a little heavy. My anonymous correspondent here exclaims:—

"Strange and marvellous creative foresight, evidence of *design within design*, anticipatory through the ages of all possible or conceivable variety or combination of varieties in musical evolution!"

And he concludes with this quaint general summary:—

"Most perfect camera (human eye); most perfect telephone (human ear); most perfect violin (human larynx); most perfect hydrostatic apparatus (human heart); most perfect series of mechanical powers (human muscles and tendons, &c.); most perfect telegraphic system (human brain and nerves); most perfect system of pavements (human skin of hand and foot); most perfect expenditure in relation to supply of fuel (human body itself); most perfect chemical laboratory (human intestinal tract); most perfect architectural arch (human foot and pelvis, &c.); most perfect instrument (human hand, prehensile, &c.); most perfect 'ball and socket joint' (human shoulder); most perfect mill (human teeth and jaw); most perfect filter

(human lung); most perfect disinfectant (human bile); most perfect thatch (human hair); most perfect screen (the human eye-lid); most perfect form of government (the grey cellular system of the human brain).

IV.

HEARING MUSIC.

WOULD you rather be blind or deaf? Most people will illogically reply, "Neither!" but when pressed, nine out of ten will be found to answer, "Leave me the sight of my eyes—let me be deaf." Yet all experience shows that they are wrong. Deafness tries the temper more, isolates more, unfits for social converse, cuts off from the world of breathing emotional activity, tenfold more than blindness. There is something as yet unanalysed about sound, which doubles and intensifies at all points the sense of living: when we hear, we are somehow more alive than when we see. Apart from sound, the outward world has a dream-like and unreal look—we only half believe in it; we miss at each moment what it contains. It presents, indeed, innumerable pictures of still-life; but these refuse to yield up half their secrets. If anyone is inclined to doubt this, let him stop his

123. DEAF AND BLIND.

ears with cotton wool for five minutes, and sit in the room with some intelligent friend who enjoys the full use of his ears, and at the end of five or ten minutes let the two compare notes. Of course, we must suppose that both are doing nothing, except the one taking stock of his loss, and the other taking stock of his gain.

I sit then, in my chair stone deaf. I look up at the pictures on the wall—a man driving a goat, a hay-stack, and some pigs—an engraving of MILLAIS "Black Brunswicker." I am tired of the sight of it. I notice the bird on his perch; his mouth is wide open, he looks to me as if he were in a fit. I point at him in an alarmed manner; my friend shakes his head with a smile—the bird's only singing. I can't say I am glad to hear it, for I cannot hear anything. Presently my friend rises and goes to the door, opens it—what on earth for? Why, in jumps the cat. I suppose he heard it outside; it might have mewed till doomsday, as far as my ears were concerned. My strange companion has no sooner sat down on his chair, than he jumps up as if stung. He points out, in answer to my bewildered look, that the legs are loose; he must have heard them creak, I suppose. Then he goes up to the clock, and begins winding it up; he must have noticed that it had left off ticking. I might not have found that out for hours. Another start! he rushes from the room, I follow—the maid has spilt the coal-scuttle all

124.
DEAF FOR TEN MINUTES.

down the stairs; he probably heard the smash. My wife might have fallen down-stairs and broken her neck, and I should have known nothing about it. No sooner are we alone again, than he once more rises, I know not why; but I perceive he is met at the door by someone who has called him; it is of no use for anyone to call me.

There happens to be a kettle on the fire, and at a particular moment my prudent friend rises. I should never have thought of it—the kettle is going to boil over; he *hears*. All this is insupportable. I am being left out of life—it is worse than being shut up in the dark. I tear the wool out of my ears long before the expiration of the ten minutes, and my friend addresses me as follows:

"I pass over the canary, the cat, the chair, the coal-scuttle, and the kettle. You happened to find out about them a day after the fair by using your eyes; but besides all this, of how much vivid life were you deprived—how many details of consciousness, how many avenues of thought were lost to you in less than ten minutes! As I sat, I could hear your favourite nocturne of CHOPIN being played in the next room. Perhaps you did not know it was raining; nor should I have noticed it, only I heard it on the sky-light. I therefore rang the bell, ordered a trap-door open in the roof to be shut, and sent the carriage for a lady who would have otherwise had to walk home. You did not notice a loud crack behind you; but, in fact, a hot coal flew out of the fire, and I seized it in time to prevent mischief. The postman's knock

reminded me of some letters I ought to write, and I made a note of them. The band playing outside put me in mind of some concert-tickets I had promised to send. A neighbouring church-bell reminded me of the fact that it was Wednesday, and about a quarter to eleven o'clock. Punch and Judy heard in the distance reminded me of the children, and some toys I had promised. I could hear the distant whistle of a train. The pleasant crackling of the fire behind me was most genial. I let a poor bee out who was buzzing madly upon the window-pane. I heard a ring at the street-bell, presently I heard a well-known voice in the hall. I knew who had arrived—I knew who met him; I could shrewdly conjecture where they went together, and I guessed not unnaturally that the children's lessons would be neglected that morning, since a far more agreeable companion had stepped in to monopolise the eldest daughter. Of all which things, my poor friend, you knew nothing, because your ears were stuffed with cotton wool."

125. THE MUSICAL EAR.

Alas! too many of us go through life with our ears stuffed with cotton wool. Some persons can hear, but not well; others can hear common sounds and musical sounds, and no one would suspect in them any defect, until it some day turns out that they do not know the difference between "God save the Queen" and "Auld lang syne." Thus we reach the distinction between the common ear and the musical ear. Then, in

connection with the musical ear, there are mysteries. Some cannot hear sounds lower than a certain note; others cannot hear them higher than a certain note, *as musical sounds.*

The mystery of the musical ear has not been solved. Yet some things are known about it. There is probably no ear so radically defective—except a deaf ear—as to be incapable of a certain musical training. The curate who arrives in a High Church parish without a notion of the right note to intone upon, and with the vaguest powers of singing it when it is given him, in a few months learns to take fairly the various pitches in the service.

126. HELMHOLTZ ON THE EAR.

But still the question remains—a physiological one—why is one ear musical and another not? PROFESSOR HELMHOLTZ, whose discoveries in the sound-world are only comparable to the discoveries of NEWTON in the world of light, has put forth an ingenious theory somewhat to this effect:—He discovered within the ear, and soaked in a sensitive fluid, rows and rows of microscopic nerves—several hundred in number—each one of which, like the string of a pianoforte, he believed vibrated to some note; therefore, we were to infer that just as a note sung outside a piano will set up in the corresponding wire a sympathetic vibration, so any sound or sounds in the outer world represented by a nerve wire, or nerves in the ear, could be heard by the ear; and, as a consequence, I suppose any absence of, or defect

in these internal nerve wires, would prevent us from hearing the sound as others better constituted would hear it.

The next direct question of musical ear now becomes one of inherited tendency and special training. The musical ear

127. is the ear that has learned—by constantly using

WHAT IS THE MUSICAL EAR?

the same intervals—to recognise the tones and semi-tones of the usual scale, and to regard all variations of quarter-tones as exceptions and subtleties not to be taken account of in the general construction of melody and harmony. Now, our octave, and our division of the octave into tones and semi-tones, is not artificial, but natural, founded as much upon certain laws of sound-vibration as our notation (if I may say so) of colour is founded upon the laws of light-vibration. But although the selection of eight notes with their semi-tones is the natural and scientific scale, seeing that the ear is capable of hearing impartially vast numbers of other vibrations of sound which produce vast numbers of other intervals, quarter-notes, &c., what we have to do in training the musical ear is just to harp on the intervals which compose the musical scale in various keys, and on these only. In this way the ear gets gradually weaned from sympathy with what is out of tune—ceases to be dog-like or savage-like, and becomes the cultured organ for recognising the natural order and progression of those measured and related vibrations which we call musical sound. Of course, a tendency like this can be inherited

just as much as any other, and in almost all cases it can be improved and cultivated.

* * * * *

I have mentioned PROFESSOR HELMHOLTZ's theory, but have reason to think that he is not, on reconsideration, prepared to endorse it fully. The little rows of minute nerve-wires, each vibrating to a definite sound, is indeed a fascinating idea; but whether true or false, it enables us, by a kind of physical parable, to understand the sort of way in which the ear, being capable of perceiving a large variety of sounds, may be trained to give the preference to certain ones by constantly allowing itself to be exercised by their vibrations, and accustoming itself to select certain notes, and establish between them definite and fixed relations. The exact physical mechanism which enables the ear to do this may have yet to be discovered, but that it exists there can be no doubt, and the use and cultivation of it is in fact the use and cultivation of what we call "an ear for music."

128. AN APOLOGY BEFORE THE CURTAIN.

And now I feel I owe the reader an apology. When I have some subject which I am desirous to discuss, something over which I may have been brooding for years, my first instinct is to plunge into the middle of it; my second is to begin at the beginning; my third (and this is the one I generally succumb to) is to begin before the beginning. Thus the important remarks which I am about to make on hearing music

have been fairly pushed aside, first, by one preface on the sense of hearing generally, and second, by another preface on the musical ear in particular; but *In medias res* shall be my motto now; no more dallying with the ubject; no more strutting in front of the curtain; no more prologue—the actors wait, the bell rings, the curtain rises; let us hope there is a good audience.

129. MRS. DE PERKINS "AT HOME."

This is an afternoon "AT HOME." These words, you will observe, are printed in very large type. In a corner of the card we gather from the small word "music," the quite mixed and genial nature of the whole entertainment. SIGNOR BOREO GUFFAW, the well-known bass singer, is expected to look in, a few amateurs have promised to help if necessary, and everyone who knows MRS. DE PERKINS is aware that this is one of those two annual assemblies in which that well-meaning lady endeavours to pay off the various dinners and "At Homes" which she may herself have been exposed to during the past year. DE PERKINS, who is elderly, engaged in the city, and not wealthy, won't give dinners; he does not like these "At Homes," but he is told that they are necessary—and then GUFFAW, who taught MRS. DE PERKINS before she was married, is very good-natured, and so is everyone; and the rooms, not very large, are soon full, the staircase early ceases to be navigable, and MRS. DE PERKINS, who really is rather nice, stands

at the door, and does her best to catch everyone's eye, although, by a certain wild and anxious look in her face, we know that she is wondering why GUFFAW does not begin.

130. IN A NICHE.

Jammed into a niche which just fits me if I hold my arms quite stiff, and stand up stark and straight, I presently hear the eminent foreigner begin "In questa Tomba 'scura." Do I enjoy this song? In the first place I am ill at ease. I crane my neck to look round the corner: I can just see the portly basso with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, but just opposite me stands my hostess receiving more guests, and the consequence is that GUFFAW's "Tomba" is mixed up with all kinds of *sotto voce's*—"So glad you've come," "How's ——?" "You musn't talk," "Tea in the next room"—whilst in front of me conversation, momentarily suspended, recommences, all about some garden party and someone being lost, and where they were found, and who they were with, and so on.

131. YOU MUST NOT TALK. MORAL.

Do I enjoy the music? Whether I do or not, I intend to get out of this miserable niche—away to the other room, where there is tea. The song is over, and there is naturally a pause in the conversation: at last I find someone that I wish to talk to. I am just explaining with unequalled lucidity the new

scheme for boring the Channel Tunnel — attracting, in short, more than one attentive listener—when up trips my anxious but smiling hostess, "You must really listen to this gentleman who is playing: a clergyman, you know, most gifted; he plays nothing but the oldest masters: Bach, and that sort, you know. Hush! hush!" and she glides off tapping and silencing people right and left, just as they have got into a nice chat and are beginning to make way—as I was, in fact.

I look round me. Disappointed, cross, irritable-looking faces, which a moment before were smiling and animated, and from the distance the hard tinkle of the perfectly self-satisfied musician grating upon everyone's nerves—why? Not because it is so bad, simply because it is not wanted then and there. Gradually, as the everlasting fugue goes on and on, or runs into another fugue, people begin to talk feebly. I begin about the Channel again, but by this time my audience has dispersed; my most devoted hearer—a lady who suffers frightfully from sea-sickness—does not seem to remember where I left off. I can't quite remember myself—we drop the subject. I have got to begin all over again, but with something different, to someone else; then at last the fugue leaves off. Did anyone enjoy the music? Then GUFFAW is put on to sing a duet just as I was telling that capital story about the sparrow in church. Well, of course it was no good, all the point was taken out of it because I had to hurry over it and end in a guilty kind of underbreath.

I did not stay to hear the new amateur tenor, Mr. Flutuloo, who, I am told, sang with an eye-glass fixed rigidly in one eye, whilst he positively wept with the other. I can believe that the sensation he created may have been considerable, I was a great deal too sore about the Channel Tunnel and the sparrow, &c., to care; in short, I left Mrs. de Perkins's At Home in a very bad humour after, I regret to say, hearing some music, but certainly not enjoying it. The moral of this is—

1. Let it be either Music or conversation, but not both.

2. If music, let all the audience be musical, and all the musicians good.

3. Don't cram the room and suffocate the singers, but ask a moderate company, let them all be seated, and let the conversation in between be limited to the merest interchange of courtesies.

4. Avoid the current musical "At Home." The De Perkins's method never answers; it offends the real musicians, encourages musical impostors, and bores the company.

132. CONCERTS AND BALLADS.

Some people enjoy themselves at concerts. But "some people" and "concerts" are vague terms. You must go with the right people, and you must go to the right concerts. These right conditions will, of course, vary according to taste and cultivation. The right people for *you* are in all cases the people with whom you are musically in sympathy. The right con-

certs for *you* are the concerts you can at least in some measure enjoy and understand. The classical pedant sneers at people who delight in ballad concerts and hate WAGNER, but the greatest composers have not been above ballads; and although there are bad ballads, yet the characteristics of a ballad—namely, that it should be lyrical, simple, and easily understood—are not bad characteristics. Some of the greatest men have been infinite losers because they happened to be generally unintelligible, whilst inferior people have exercised an influence out of proportion to their merits, simply because they made themselves generally understood. And be it observed, that this element of intelligibility is one common to the ballad and all the *greatest* works of art. The greatest men all "strike home." The transfiguration is simple—so is the Moses of Michael Angelo. So is HANDEL'S *Messiah* taken as a whole. So is the *Elijah* of MENDELSSOHN. They are a great deal more than simple, but they are *that*. I have drawn a deplorable scene descriptive of the hearing of music in private; let me revive a scene, fresh, doubtless, in the memory of many now living, in which the hearing of music in public probably reached its climax. I allude to the production of MENDELSSOHN'S *Elijah* at the Birmingham festival of 1846, upon which occasion MENDELSSOHN himself wielded the conductor's bâton.

On that memorable August morning in the year 1846,

when, punctual to the minute, FELIX MENDELSSOHN stepped into the conductor's seat, and, facing the immense audience assembled in the noble Town Hall of Birmingham, was received with a storm of applause which was taken up and redoubled by the chorus and orchestra—how little did that vast audience know that in little more than a year from that time the heart of the great composer would have ceased to beat! That day, we must always think, was the crowning moment of his life, and that great oratorio seems to us the culmination of his mighty musical and dramatic faculty. All those who were present declare that that first public performance was one never to be forgotten—the novelty of treatment, the startling effects, the enchanting subjects, the prodigious daring of some of the situations, the heavenly melodies which have since become musical watchwards, and, above all, the presence of the composer, who sent an electric thrill through the room, and inspired chorus, band, and singers with the same lofty enthusiasm which made him so great and irresistible in achievement—all this may now, alas, be remembered, but can never be reproduced. It made the hearing of the music of *Elijah* for the first time a perfectly typical occasion, and one whose conditions, as far as they are realisable, should never cease to be striven after.

133. THE "ELIJAH" AT BIRMINGHAM IN 1846. MENDELSSOHN.

A dire contrast to such performances as this may be found any day in those extraordinary entertainments called mixed

concerts, where every style and every composer, from
134. Bach to Offenbach—save the mark!—may be
THE MIXED MONSTER CONCERT. heard. From these the true musician retires with what may be called a harmonic indigestion of the worst possible description. Mendelssohn, Spohr, Meyerbeer, Moscheles, and von Bülow, have in turn expressed their amazement and horror at the popular notion of a concert programme. But all this is a part of the general state of musical ignorance in England, and can only disappear when increased culture makes the incongruity of such mixtures apparent to their present admirers.

There are other kinds of mixed concerts which have their excuse, but they are private; there are no contradictions,
135. no aggravations, no jolts in them. We are
THE MIXED CHAMBER CONCERT. not shocked out of one phase of emotion into another; we are not compelled to swallow an Italian *buffo* song after a duet from Mozart's requiem, or a ballad of Claribel, followed by a bit of Spohr's *Last Judgment*. And yet the programme is mixed, varied,—as the conversation of friends is varied, flitting bird-like through many lands, pausing above giddy precipices, gliding over summer seas, lingering in bright meadows, poised above populous cities, lingering about the habitations of man. But no more prosy efforts to describe what is indescribable; let the curtain rise once more and let the actors themselves appear before me.

She is fair, with brown-red hair; she is serene, with one of those quiet, equable temperaments, whose privilege it is to blend others into harmony by yielding to each new wave of thought and feeling as it rises, with that sort of simple, unaffected pleasure, the very sight of which makes others happy. Alas! she has been dead these many summers; yet it is the privilege of memory to unlock the doors of old rooms, and find there suddenly, as in a dream, the scenes that have faded out of the real world for ever. For a moment I close my eyes. It is an autumn evening by the sea. How pleasantly the waves came plashing in as we paced the shore in the deepening light! We spoke of those weird songs of SCHUBERT which seem like sad eyes looking out into the sunset over some waste of measureless waters; we spoke of those Nocturnes of CHOPIN, like dream-scenes, painted on tinted backgrounds.

136. SHADOWS OF THE PAST.

"His life," said FERDINAND, "was what NOVALIS would have called a dream within a dream."

"Yes," I answered, "but a dream always starting from reality and breaking into it again."

"And is not that reflected in his music?" rejoined ESTELLE. "It makes it sometimes quite terrible to me, the harsh contrast between the reality and the dream, a chord, a transition bar, and then fainter and fainter grows the shadow-land, so intensely real and passionate the moment before,—it darkens and melts into a thin, cold mist,—

just as those gorgeous shadows of purple and orange on the sea, which seemed a minute ago almost substantial, melt and leave the cold sea dark, and the air keen and sharp."

"Yes, that was the history of CHOPIN'S life; the love of MADAME SAND was his dream, and the awakening was the cold sea and the sharp, keen air that killed him."

"But before the end what dreams haunted him, fragments of the never-forgotten days, embalmed in fugitive melody, and mystically woven harmonies! I think he must have lived over again perfectly in such moments. They were the realities, and the outer life, latterly at least, became the dream. Listen!

. . . . .

"What sweetness is here, this grassy bank, these drooping citron flowers, these glowing azaleas, fringing the summer Islet, set like a jewel in the bosom of the Mediterranean! The name of LUCREZIA FLORIANI rises to my lips, the name of the PRINCE KAROL, who is CHOPIN. Time is not, these skies are eternally blue, this welling up of crystal water, just kissing the fringe of drooping blossom against the shore, this hum of insect life, breaking the silence, only to make the summer air more slumbrous, and the little rain-cloud on the horizon, which, toward evening, will creep up, until the distance is blotted out, and the black sky is rent with forked lightning. Such things

entered into CHOPIN's soul, and live for ever in his profound and strange musical reveries.

"But apart from this deeply personal element, the deepest thing of all, as it is in the nature of every true Pole, was the undertone of sad patriotism; this pierces when least expected, this is never long absent. Listen!

. . . . .

"It is a dazzling crowd, glittering with diamond lights—a profusion of rare jewels; the halls are filled with perfume, the strains of a mazurka are in the air, they seem to call forth as by magic, and support with the breath of some mystic life, these floating, swaying forms of beautiful women, and these countrymen of CHOPIN, without a country, and as the dance goes weaving on, with a certain dreamy and pensive grace, we perceive that in the heart of the music there is a deep wound, a minor chord of inextinguishable pain, hidden by lovely arabesques of subtle sweetness, winning, beguiling, subduing; but never for long hiding the forlorn sorrow of a hopeless, but undying patriotism. Now it is a Polonaise. Listen!

. . . . .

"What enterprise, what indomitable effort to achieve the impossible, what frantic exploits, as of one resolved to die on the battle-field, but before dying to overwhelm with deeds of intrepid valour his terrible and relentless foe! The pauses are the pauses of sheer exhaustion, in them we

catch through the sulphurous clouds a sight of remote battle-scenes and distant combinations, until the warrior rises again in his strength, and once more for a time his enemies fly scattered."

"I shall think of all this when I play your favourite Polonaise." She drew her shawl close to her—the mist crept round the bay—it was no longer summer; we went in, we three, how happy, how harmonious, blended by the grace—the free, the tender grace—of one lovely and beloved presence!

137.
A NIGHT IN THE PAST.

Unlock the door—let no footfall from the present disturb this shadow-scene. It is the old room—the familiar room. I see her there. There is no sense of strangeness or unreality about her; she smiles, as she was wont to smile, she moves softly—her fingers turn the music leaves—the candles are lighted—her face is half in shade—I can hear her low melodious laugh. I seem to be once more holding my Stradivarius violin lovingly. What! there is no sign of dust, or age, or neglect about this long-closed room. As we go back to past chapters of a beloved story, so have I gone back to read again a fragment of life, and as I look, and look, and look, the intervening years roll away, the shadows become real, "till only the dead seem living, and only the living seem dead."

Let it be MENDELSSOHN'S D minor trio, the playing of

that night remains with me—we seemed alive—sensitively alive to every vibration; her fingers caressed the cool ivory keys lovingly, the Stradivarius spoke rapturously to the lightest touch of the bow, the full-toned violoncello gave out the deep but tender notes, like the voices of the sea in enchanted caves. How clean and "seizing," as the French say, was her rendering of the opening movement! How wonderfully woven-in were the parts! We all three made but one, yet retaining our perfect individualities. A mystic presence invisible seemed to be with us, we felt as if playing in the presence of the great, the gentle MENDELSSOHN; and though we played, so absorbed were we, that we seemed at the same moment to be following our own music like listeners, in ourselves and out of ourselves. Between the movements we spoke not. I marked the flush upon her cheek—the bright light in her eyes. He was grave, intensely pre-occupied—the dream-power was upon us all. The peace and full contentment of the slow movement with its rich and measured flow of melody melting at last into that heavenly trance at the close, which leaves us at the open gates of Paradise; then the sudden break at the scherzo, as though a joyous troop of lower earth-spirits had burst in to tear us away from the divine contemplation, and toss us back into a world of wild uproar and merriment; then a slight pause before the tempestuous, but intensely earnest, conclusion. Here is the battle of life, with its suspense, its failure, its endeavour — striving for the

victory, its wild and passionate overthrow, its indomitable recovery and untamed valour; that is the bracing and sublime atmosphere of the last movement more true to life than ecstasy, more wholesome than peace, more dignified than pleasure; and that is where the D minor trio leaves us.

Then we drifted into talk of MENDELSSOHN. As she sat she occasionally played some fragment from a concerto—some striking chord from the *St. Paul,* some passage from *Ruy Blas,* or an echo from the incomparably delicate overture to the beautiful "Melusine," till one said "Sing," and she sang from SCHUMANN, the ballads from HEINE—those tragedies and melodramas in three verses, or in two lines, and BRAHM'S "Guten Abend, Gute Nacht." Then followed songs without words, and sitting in the shadow I saw her face in the light, and felt her spirit rise and fall upon the pulses of invisible sound, in unison with ours. Then came some of ERNST'S reveries on the violin, and so the evening wore away, and we took no account of the hours.

Were there any other listeners? Yes, at times one and another of them would recall a passage—a likeness between MENDELSSOHN and BACH, a phrase of SCARLATTI, or a combination of WAGNER in a BRAHM'S movement.

This, if you like, was a mixed programme, but its parts were mixed with subtle sympathies, and united by the finest threads of thought and emotion. Thus we moved on from one delight to another with no sense of un-

pleasant or disjointed break—as those who pass out of a lovely grotto into the sunlight, and after winding through hedge-rows of May bloom to the quiet shore, pass back into a garden of tall trees and smooth lawns, and thence to some lovely conservatory filled with tropical bloom, thence to a marble vestibule, thence to halls of tapestry, and luxurious couches and repose. And there has been no break—nothing has jarred upon us in the midst of variety. Hand in hand we have been with friends; we have seen smiles upon dear faces. We have poured forth words, and soul has been revealed to soul; and without, the world of fair things has imaged the life of vivid and inexhaustible thought and feeling within. Compare, I pray you, these parables of "Hearing Music" aright, with the strange and disjointed legend of "Mrs. de Perkins and her musical At Home."

* * * * *

I will take a wider sweep. I have received the keenest national impressions from music.

138. ITALY.

At midnight I heard the players pass by. The warm Italian air, scarce chilled by the night, came in from the orange gardens. I leaned my head forward to breathe its full fragrance. The musicians had come from yonder lighted palace; now they pass on up through the groves of citron and myrtle, from the distant deep shadows, the regular pulse of the music brings back the feeling of the dance; it is a mere echo, a shadow

dance—fainter and fainter now; I can hear it no more. I look up, the stars burn like gold.

All Italy in a moment is resumed for me in that slight picture. A few bars of music, heard at random, may conjure it up again—first the emotion, then the picture.

. . . . . .

The Feast of the Kermess was over in Amsterdam. The town filled with country people had been emptying all through the night. The booths in the market-places were struck. I stood high up, looking over the network of canals towards the Scheldt. Above my head I heard the cry of the wild swan, winging its way southward from Sweden, and below a rough chorus of men and women came over the bridge. It was loud, boisterous singing, but in parts well defined, rhythmic, and full of a strong charm; they passed into a side street; the drinking chorus seemed to split into fragments and then cease. How often has it since rung in my ears, and so often has it brought back with it the hearty, coarse, eager life of Holland, and the keen, brackish odour of the wind blowing in from the North Sea.

139. HOLLAND.

But in each case observe the peculiar, direct power which music has of dealing with the nerve centres. It is not the image which is recalled and which brings back the feeling, but the sound awakes directly a peculiar rhythm of nervous wave-motion, which

140. EMOTION AND THE PAINTER.

is the physical vehicle for a peculiar feeling. Thus a breath of the past in a desert at first unpeopled, the very atmosphere of a past moment is restored, in which mystic air the forms of dead scenes and persons begin to live and grow again, and at last become intensely vivid. In this, note that music differs from every other art. The painter and poet alike depend directly upon scenes and concrete images for their emotion, but the musician depends directly upon emotion for his scenes and images, and even when these are absent, he is not less potent—sometimes more so—for he can handle and mould the temperature of the mind itself at will, wind up feeling unconnected with thought through every semitone, modulate and change it, fit and unfit us for exertion, make us forget the hard, persistent images of pain and trouble, and the coarse realism that damps joy, —by creating an atmosphere within in which these cannot breathe, and so are expelled as to any power they may have to move us,—actually expelled for a season from the mind.

141. MAGIC OF MUSIC.

There is a phrase, "I was carried away by the music." That expression is true to feeling; it means, "When I heard this or that, I ceased to be affected by the outward things or thoughts which a moment before moved me; I entered a world of other feeling, or—what I before possessed was so heightened and changed that I seemed to have been 'carried away' from the old

thing in a moment." But it would be still truer to say, not "music carried me away," but "music carried away, or changed, the mood, and with it the significance of the things which occupied me in that mood."

SECRET OF THE AUDITORY NERVE.

142. The easy command over the emotions possessed by sound, and elaborated by the art of music, is due to the direct impact of the air-waves upon the drum of the ear, which collects them and sends them to the seat of consciousness in the brain by means of the auditory nerve. The same, of course, is true of the waves of colour upon the eye, scent upon the nose, and vibrations of touch taken by the brain even from the most distant nerve in the body. But the auditory nerve has in some things a strange advantage and prerogative of power over the others. First, the distance from the ear to the brain is shorter than that of any other of the sensitive surfaces, so the time taken to convey the impressions of sound is less, and therefore the impact more direct. This measured by time is infinitesimal, but measured by emotional effect it counts for much. Secondly, the vibrations of sound as distinguished from the vibrations of light, and even the vibrations of touch, which are, after all, differently local,—the vibrations of sound induce a sympathetic vibration in every nerve in the body; they set it going, in short, as the strings of a piano are set going by the stroke of a hammer on the floor, and when the sound is excessive or peculiar, all the

great ganglionic centres are disturbed, the diaphragm and many other nerves and muscles are influenced, the stomach is affected, the spine "creeps," as we say, the heart quickens and throbs with strong beatings in the throat. Thus a curiously sympathetic action is set up through this physical peculiarity which sound has of shaking, moving, and at times causing to tremble the human body.

But the cause of the sympathetic action of the great ganglionic centres under the pulsations of sound lies deeper still. It is to be found in the fact that the auditory nerve is closely connected, at its origin in the *medulla oblongata* of the brain, with that of the important *nervus vagus* or *pneumogastic* supplying the heart, lungs, and the most important abdominal viscera. It is also in intimate communication with the branches of the *great sympathetic nerve* from the *ganglia* which supply the muscles regulating the tension of the ear's drum, and which modify the effect of the waves of sound upon it. And these branches, again, are in direct communication with the *vagus* and the great ganglionic centres, controlling the action of the heart and stomach. Thus excitation of the auditory nerve readily agitates these close neighbours, and they proceed to spread the influence far and wide through all the delicate network of sympathetic nerve telegraphy which pervades the entire system. Thus the effect of sound is speedily propagated through myriad side-channels, until the whole body is thrilling with its confluent waves.

Now we can explain, perhaps, why it is that our musical sensations are different in small rooms and large ones, or, to speak more closely, why the relations between the volume of sound and the space to be filled must be suitable in order to produce the right effect. I can sit close to a piano and listen to a "Lied ohne Wörte." I can take in every inflection of touch with ease, not a refinement is lost, but if I go to the end of a long room, the impact is less direct, the pleasure is less intense: the player must then exaggerate all his effects, hence a loss of refinement and ease. Public players and singers constantly make shipwreck thus in private rooms. Accustomed to vast spaces, they roar and bang until the audience is deaf, and the only reason why the unknowing applaud on such occasions, and the only difference, as far as they are concerned, between the professional and the amateur, is simply that the first is so much louder than the second. This makes them clap their hands and cry "Bravo!" but in reality they are applauding a defect.

143. MUSIC IN A ROOM.

The only musical sounds which really master vast spaces like the Albert Hall are those of a mighty organ or an immense chorus. The Handel Festival choruses are fairly proportioned to the Crystal Palace, but on one occasion, when a terrific thunderstorm burst over Sydenham in the middle of *Israel in Egypt*, every one beneath that crystal dome felt that, acoustically, the

144. MUSIC AND SPACE.

peal of thunder was very superior to the whole power of the chorus, because the relation between the space to be filled and the volume of sound required to fill it was in better proportion. But there is still something which has not yet been said for small sounds in large places. Transport yourself in imagination to the Albert Hall on some night when, as is usually the case, there is but a scanty orchestra, and presently a new mystery of sound will present itself to you. At first you will be disappointed. Anyone can hear that the hall is not properly *occupied* by the sound; the violins should be trebled at least, several of the wind instruments doubled, &c. You think you will not listen to this charming E flat symphony of MOZART; you cannot help feeling that you lose a delicate inflection here, a staccato there, a flute tone, a pianissimo on the drum, or a whole piece of counter melody,—owing to the scattered conditions of isolated vibrations lost in space.

145. SOUND-FILTERING.

But you have still something to learn, something like a new musical truth, which few people seem yet to have noticed. Listen! The sounds from the band reach you too late, perhaps. They are not simultaneous; the impact on the ear is somewhat feeble, you must even strain attentively to catch what is passing, but the more you do so the easier it becomes, just as the eye, in looking through a lens, may see all dim, but gaze on until the objects grow sharp and

clear. The nerves of the eye have adapted themselves to the new conditions, the longer you look the better you see. So in these vast uncomfortable spaces, the longer you listen the better you hear. A certain special training is required, and then gradually a new quality is perceived—we must give the process a new name—"sound filtering." The Albert Hall and the Crystal Palace are great Sound-filters. From this point of view, which it requires some delicate and attentive ear-culture to appreciate, new delights are born from the defective space conditions usually complained of. I have heard the voice of Madame Lemmens-Sherrington in the extreme distance at the Crystal Palace, when she was exerting herself to the utmost, and it sounded like a voice from heaven, full of unearthly, far-away sweetness; the same intensity and volume in a small room would have been intolerable. I have heard Bottesini on the double-bass in the open air with similar effect.

Listen to an orchestra or quartet, however fine, in a moderate-sized room; there is the catgut, the rosin, the scrape, the bite of horse-hair on strings, the earthly cannot be completely got rid of, but space will filter all that, and leave nothing but a kind of spiritual disembodied sound, like the tones of those plugged pipes in the organ that seem to steal out of some remote cloud-land with a certain veiled sweetness that makes us hold our breath.

Since I have learned to listen to these peculiar effects in all their strange gradations, a new class of musical impres-

sions has been revealed to me, and I have become much reconciled to hearing music in vast spaces. I do not go there for the kind of normal impressions, for the direct study, for the strong, immediate impact gained from music in a moderately-sized room—I lose much of all that—but I gain a number of new abnormal effects, which also have a power over certain hidden depths and distant fastnesses of the emotional region.

146. BENEFICENCE OF MUSIC.

Music has a vast future before it. We are only now beginning to find out some of its uses. With the one exception of its obvious and admitted helpfulness, as an adjunct of religious worship, as a vehicle for and incentive of religious feeling, I had almost said that we had as yet discovered none of its uses. It has been the toy of the rich, it has often been a source of mere degradation to both rich and poor, it has been treated as mere jingle and noise—supplying a rhythm for the dance, a kind of Terpsichorean *tom-tom*—or serving to start a Bacchanalian chorus—the chief feature of which has certainly not been the music. And yet those who have their eyes and ears open, may read in these primitive uses whilst they run the hints of music's future destiny as a vast civiliser, recreator, health-giver, work-inspirer, and purifier of man's life. The horse knows what he owes to his bells. The factory girls have been instinctively forced into singing, finding in it a solace and assistance in work.

And for music, the health-giver, what an untrodden field is there! Have we never known an invalid forget pain and weariness under the stimulus of music? Have you never seen a pale cheek flush up, a dull eye sparkle, an alertness and vigour take possession of the whole frame, and animation succeed to apathy? What does all this mean? It means a truth that we have not fully grasped, a truth pregnant with vast results to body and mind. It means that music attacks the nervous system directly, reaches and rouses where physic and change of air can neither reach nor rouse.

Music will some day become a powerful and acknowledged therapeutic. And it is one especially appropriate to this excited age. Half our diseases, some physicians say all our diseases, come from disorder of the nerves. How many ills of the mind precede the ills of the body! Boredom makes more patients than fever, want of interest and excitement, stagnation of the emotional life, or the fatigue of over-wrought emotion, lies at the root of half the ill-health of our young men and women. Can we doubt the power of music to break up that stagnation? Or, again, can we doubt its power to soothe? to recreate an over-strained emotional life, by bending the bow the other way? There are moods of exhausted feeling in which certain kinds of music would act like poison, just as whip and spur which encourage

147
MUSIC AS A RESTORATIVE.

the racer at first, tire him to death at last. There are other kinds of music which soothe, and, if I may use the word, lubricate the worn ways of the nervous centres. You will ask what music is good for that? We reply, judgment and common-sense, and, above all, sympathy, affectional and musical sympathy, will partly be your guide, but experience must decide. Let some friend well versed in the divine art sit at the piano, and let the tired one lie on a couch and prescribe for herself or for himself. This will happen: "Do not play that *Tannhäuser* overture just now, it wears me out, I cannot bear it"; or, "Yes—sing that 'Du bist die Ruh,' and after that I must hear MENDELSSOHN'S 'Notturno,' out of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*"; and then—and then—what must come next must be left to the tact and quick sympathy of the musician. I have known cases where an hour of this treatment did more good than bottlesful of bark or pailsful of globules; but I do not wish to over-state the case. I merely plead for an unrecognised truth, and I point to a NEW VOCATION—the vocation of the Musical Healer.

148. THE MUSICAL HEALER.

How many a girl might turn her at present uncared-for and generally useless musical abilities to this gentle and tender human use. Let her try. At the end of the *séance*, let her and her patient note the abatement of the head-ache brought about directly by the counter excitement of a nerve-current set

up by music. Let her friend admit that she has suffered less during that hour,—the mind having been completely called off from the contemplation of a special pain, and the pain meanwhile having passed or abated. There are cases chiefly connected with disorders of the spine, cases of apathy, where music is almost the only thing which seems to stir the torpid nerves and set up a commotion, quickening the heart and flushing the cheek. Then, I say, let music open the shut gate, and let health come in that way, *cælestis janitor aulæ*. But I want, before I pass, to fix my musical healer upon the reader's mind. She is gentle, she is glowing with health, but not boisterous; she has a quick sympathy for pain; she has a cool, soft hand that does the hot brow good; she rather moves than walks: the sound of her foot-fall is seldom heard. Oh, Alma! the fostering one, the healing presence, you are in many households, but you hardly know your powers; the sick bless you; they love to hear your voice; but days and weeks pass, and you never exercise your gifts for them. You are a beautiful musician, but your music would not make you the healer without your tact in applying it, your sympathy, your quick judgment, your watchfulness of effect, your faculty of giving yourself when you sing and when you play. It is the union of musical talent with personal qualities like yours, that will give you grace to apply the medicine of music to disease.

Have you ever thought of that? You have played

casually to the weary, the idle, or even the sick, but you have not with reflection played to refresh, to stimulate, or to soothe; and you cannot do this all at once.

1. You must have the idea of doing it: that is, you must conceive of music as a therapeutic art.

2. You must gain a certain easy command of a wide range of compositions that you may select your remedies wisely.

3. You must take care to establish between yourself and your patients that kindly rapport which will predispose them to listen to you; it must be the hand of something like a friend upon the white keys or upon the strings of a zither, an instrument of heavenly soothing qualities as of harps in the wind at sunset. It must be the voice of something like a friend; the voice that has said with no feigned earnestness, but with the wide, warm love of a Christ-like nature, "I wish I could do you good." Such a voice will sing well and pleasantly, and bring peace.

4. Self-training, judgment, and experience generally. The music-healer must indeed have gifts of mind, but hers will be almost as much a vocation to be learnt as that of nursing itself. She must study different kinds of temperament and disease, watch and write down and remember the effect which certain pieces or kinds of music have on certain temperaments. But the fascination of the new calling would lie in the delight of its exercise, the variety and endless excitement and surprises of its results, the inces-

sant study of character, the constant self-training and cultivation of sympathy for a definite and immediate end, and in the intense happiness of feeling that upon the waves of heavenly melody and harmony which lifted up your own soul, another's pain and distress were floating away, and that you had been the active agent in procuring this pleasure, this relief, this recovery.

Let some pen more competent than mine expand this new doctrine of "music considered as a therapeutic." If it found support from any well-accredited medical authority, with what faith and favour would it be received by thousands of sufferers! with what alacrity would spring up right and left our musical healers, coveting and exercising earnestly the best gifts of character and training! It would not be long before we had a hand-book on the subject, with suggestions for a course of treatment based on actual experience.

Music is not only a body healer; it is a mind regulator.

"MUSIC AND MORALS" AGAIN.

149. The great educational function of music remains almost to be discovered. The future mission of music for the million is the DISCIPLINE OF EMOTION.

What is the ruin of art? Ill-regulated emotion.

What is the ruin of life? Again, ill-regulated emotion.

What mars happiness? What destroys manliness? What sullies womanhood? What checks enterprise? What spoils

success? Constantly the same—ill-regulated emotion. The tongue is a fire, an uncontrolled and passionate outburst swallows up many virtues, and blots out weeks of kindness.

There is one thing more important than knowing self; it is governing self. There is one thing better than crushing impulse; it is using impulse. The life of the ascetic is half true, the life of the voluptuary is the other half true. The stoic may be said to be blind at least of one eye. The cynic is very nearly blind of both, since the power and the passion and the splendid uses of existence are hidden from him, and all these go wrong in various ways, from abusing, misusing, or neglecting the emotional life.

150. THE GREEKS' "MUSICAL" DISCIPLINE.

The Greek was not far wrong when he laid such stress on gymnastics and music. Of music, indeed, in its modern, exhaustive, and subtle developments, as the language of the emotions, he knew nothing; but his faint guess was with a certain fine and unerring instinct in the right direction; shame upon us that, in the blaze of modern music, we have almost missed its deepest meaning! The Greek at least understood how sound regulated motion, which is, after all, only the physical expression of emotion; not a procession, not a social gathering, not a gymnasium, nay, not even an important oration, was thought complete without the introduction of musical sound, and that not as a mere jingle or pastime, out to regulate the order, the variety, the intensity

of bodily motions, actions, and words, so that throughout there might be an elaborate discipline carried on through musical sound, a discipline which, thus learned at the schools, met the Greek again at every turn in his social and political life, and ended by making his earth-life that rounded model of physical and intellectual harmony, and perfection which has made at once the despair and wonder of sculptors, poets, and philosophers of all ages.

And we living in the full development of this divine art of Music, put it to less practical uses than the Greek, who never got beyond music as a rhythmic and melodic regulator of dancing, feasting, and oratory!

. . . . .

It remains for us to take up the pregnant hint, and claim modern music as the great organ of emotional culture and emotional discipline. This practical view of the unique and perfect functions of the musical art is, I think, sufficiently new to require a little further explanation.

"How," it will be asked, "apart from mere pleasure—pleasure, if you will, of a harmless and elevating kind—am I a bit better for the hearing of music?"

In answering this question, I leave out the effect produced on bodily health through the agitation of the nervous centres by musical sound, as dwelt upon above. I will come to close quarters again with Music and Morals, and I will show how hearing music in the right way gets up, as it were, the steam power of emotion, collects it, concentrates

it, and then puts it through such innumerable stages of discipline, that the very force of emotion which, allowed to run wild, brings ruin into life, grows, through the right hearing of great and skilful music, docile, controlled, indefinitely plastic, or at the call of the will, resistless in might.

Music, in short, is bound, when properly used and understood, to train us in the exercise of our emotions, as the gymnasium trains us in the exercise of our limbs. The Greek understood both these uses, we probably understand neither.

151. MECHANISM OF THE EMOTIONAL ART.

First, then, music rouses the emotions. Inward activities long dormant or never before awakened, are called up, and become new powers within the breast; for, remember, emotion nerves for action. The stupidest horse that goes up hill to the sound of bells, the timidest soldier that marches to battle with fife and drum, the most delicate girl who spins round tireless in the dance, the poorest labourer who sings at his work—any of them are good enough to prove that music rouses and sustains emotion.

But, secondly, music disciplines and controls emotion.

That is the explanation of the art of music, as distinguished from the mere power of the musical sound. You can rouse with a stroke; but to guide, to moderate, to control, to raise and depress, to combine, to work out a definite

scheme involving appropriate relations and proportions of force, and various mobility—for this you require the subtle machinery of an art, and the direct machinery for stirring up and regulating emotion, is the wonderful vibratory mechanism created by the art of music.

Those who wish to see how, as the hand-maid to thought, music steps in to elaborate and control emotion, I will refer to my analysis of *Elijah*, in *Music and Morals*; but I wish to give here a short example of the way in which a train of abstract emotion, capable of being fitted to different ideas, or capable of underlying more than one series of mental events (so long as the relations of them be similar and parallel), can be roused and developed in a fixed artistic form by music. My present limits will not allow me to take one of the great symphonies of BEETHOVEN or MENDELSSOHN for this. I will select a "Lied ohne Wörte"; let us take, for instance, No. 10, the fourth Lied of the Second Book. I will mention the bars by their numbers, instead of using technical terms, such as a key of D or F, subdominant, tonic, &c. It is difficult to describe mental states apart from particular thoughts, but as far as possible we will try to do so, and so express the consciousness of a state of mind which might be equally appropriate to several separate and distinct, though similar and parallel trains of thought.

152. TALE OF A "SONG WITHOUT WORDS."

Understand what I mean by similar and parallel trains of

thought. Let me even appeal to the eye, and put my similar thoughts in parallel columns, thus :—

I. Man losing his temper.	I. Sea ruffled with wind.
II. Man lost his temper	II. Sea convulsed.
III. Smashes the furniture.	III. Thunder and lightning.
IV. Is appeased by wife.	IV. Blue sky, wind drops.
V. All is forgiven and forgotten.	V. Sun breaks out, sea calms.

One, and the same train of emotion, or general cast of feeling may fitly underlie such two progressive scenes; but the events must in every case be similar in tone, and run parallel; only in this sense does music, as it is sometimes loosely said, mean all sorts of things to different people.

I now return to an emotional analysis of Lied IV., of Book II., MENDELSSOHN. With the first bars of rapid semi-

153. LIED OHNE WÖRTE, BOOK II. 4.

quavers, increasing from *p* to *sf*, we are thrown into a state of restless emotion, dashed (bars 4, 5, 6,) with suspense, as when one heaves and holds his breath at a passing thought of some agitating possibility (7, 8, 9, 10), the flash of suspense passes off, lowering back the tone of mind to its first state; that state, instead of subsiding as before, passes into a reflex sort of reasoning upon itself, as though one said (15, 16, 17, ½18), "But why should I disquiet myself in vain?" (½18, 19, 20). "I will resist, I will shake it off (21), I will be free (22) the cloud has passed (23), I see my joy (24, 25, 26, 27. 28. 29. 30). O ecstatic vision, I lose myself in this splendid

revelation, I float out upon the tide of triumph. Now I rest, bathed in tranquil peace, and perfect satisfaction (31, 32, ½33), I prolong the dream." But already the ecstatic glow has cooled (½33, 34, 35, 36), a faint touch of earth bitterness, a misgiving (D sharp) has crept in (37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42), and is confirmed until the vision of bliss is almost obliterated, and the emotion is in danger of sinking back at once to its first condition of morbid restlessness, but that would be monotonous (45); at this point it is, therefore, caught by new reflex action of the feelings, and a struggle takes place (46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51), represented by the opening subject struggling up in the bass, checked, then struggling up in the treble, checked at *sf*, and then *cresc.*, struggling up (51) once more. Then there is a pause, emotion is at a standstill, and at last grows almost tepid and indifferent; dropping at 57, *p* and *dim.*, almost listless, when at 60 the struggle recommences with fresh violence, the great effort of the mind to cast out the restless, passionate broodings of the first page (60 to 71), produces a storm of conflicting emotions, in which now one side, now another seems uppermost, till at last the mind, trembling on the morbid verge, passes over the line with a kind of wilful and helpless self-surrender; but this time the experiences through which it has passed make it impossible quite to repeat the morbid and restless series, and (72) only half the first subject is given, the emotion is hampered, it does not run easily, it cannot get on, then (76) the same phrase

over again, *piu f*, with growing impatience, a change of some sort is evidently at hand (81), the old subject is tossed away as worthless and unfit for the purpose, as the spirit feels itself breathed upon once more, and held by some new force, through a series of bars (81 to 87), until expectancy is crowned, and with a crescendo of ascending octaves, which makes us fairly hold our breath, whilst the action of the pulse is rapidly quickened, suddenly,—but this time on a higher pitch, and with quite bewildering power of effect—the glory breaks again upon the soul, and we seem "rapt from the fickle and the frail," and caught up into that splendid air of joy and bounding triumph. The poor shaken and earth-worn spirit is thus held for a little space in Paradise. It is its last gleam of perfect peace. Already at 103, the vision has well-nigh faded out; at 111 the light of common day has been fairly reached, and the perilous struggle between morbid brooding and noble endurance is in danger of recommencing. Four times, at 119, 123, 125, and 126, the morbid passage reminding us of the opening phrase, knocks (*ff*) passionately for admittance, and is sternly negatived by the bass. At 129, 130, 131, there is a very natural pause of brief exhaustion at *p*. At 132 the emotion is stirred, but this time less strongly; we feel that a new and more normal life is now going to open out, into which indeed we are not permitted to enter, for the Lied draws to its close. The vision of triumph has had its own chastening and purifying effect, although the

triumph of joy is evidently not near, still the restless and passionate mood of anxious brooding, which so unfits for the life that has still to be lived out, has also passed; the last unemphatic memory of it occurs 138, not even *half* the first subject as before, is repeated only *one bar* of it, and the emotion is then left unimpassioned and suspended on a long D, the same chord for six bars, without change in treble or bass, serving to close the piece, and leaving the mind in a self-contained and reconciled, if not a happy mood, ready now to enter without harrowing pre-occupation upon the more ordinary phases and pursuits of life.

Now if music does really rouse and then take in hand and rule at its will, and thereby teach us to rule the emotions,

154. TRAINING OF ABSTRACT EMOTION.

it is obvious that we are, when we hear music intelligently and sympathetically, *actually cultivating abstract habits of mind which may afterwards be transferred as trained forces to the affairs of daily life.* As the study of Euclid trains the mind in the abstract, so the study of music trains the emotions in the abstract. If you want to touch and train this emotional life, music is your all-powerful ally.

The time is not distant when this great truth will be understood and practised in connection with our toiling masses—our artisans, our poor, our labourers, our degraded denizens of back streets, cellars, and foul alleys. There are millions whose only use of the emotional life is base,

undisciplined, and degraded. Pleasure with many means crime—restraint, the real hand-maid of pleasure, is unknown; system, order, harmony in their feelings, habits of self-control, checking the impulses, moderating and economizing the feelings, guiding them to powerful purposes and wise ends and wholesome joys—of all this our masses are chiefly ignorant; yet if what I have maintained be true, all this music would mightily *help* to teach and to give.

155. EFFECT OF THE "MESSIAH" ON THE MASSES.

I have known the oratorio of the *Messiah* draw the lowest dregs of Whitechapel into a church to hear it, and during the performance sobs have broken forth from the silent and attentive throng. Will anyone say that for these people to have their feelings for once put through such a noble and long-sustained exercise as that, could be otherwise than beneficial? If such performances of both sacred and secular music were more frequent, we should have less drunkenness, less wife-beating, less spending of summer gains, less pauperism in winter. People get drunk because they have nothing else to do; they beat their wives because their minds are narrow, their tastes brutal, their emotions, in a word, ill-regulated; they spend their wages because they have no self-control, and dawdle in public-houses, where money must be spent, simply in the absence of all other resources; and they starve in winter because they have not acquired the habit of steady work, which is impossible without steady and

wholesome recreation,—or that steady thrift and self-control which is impossible apart from disciplined emotion.

The question of music for the people will some day become a great government question. A few thousands spent on promoting bands, cheap and good, accessible and respectable, would save the country millions in poor-rates. I do not say that mnsic will ever shut up all our prisons and workhouses, but I venture to believe that as a chief and sovereign means of rousing, satisfying, and recreating the emotions, it would go far to diminish the number of paupers and criminals. It would help them to save, it would keep them from drink, it would recreate them wholesomely, and teach them to govern their feelings—to use, and not invariably abuse, their emotions.

156. GIVE THE PEOPLE MUSIC.

One Saturday afternoon I stood outside a public house, and saw the groups of men standing round the door. Those that came to the door did not enter; those who came forth with lighted pipes, paused; a slatternly girl or two, with a ragged child in her arms; a wife who had followed her husband to look after the Saturday wages, which were going straight to the gin-shop; a costermonger with his cart drew up; the idle cabmen came across the road; even a few dirty, stone-throwing, dog-worrying boys ceased their sport; and two or three milliners' "Hands" stood still. And what was it all about? I blush for my country! A wretched cornet

with a harp, no two strings of which were in tune, the harpist trying wildly to follow "The last rose of summer" with but two chords, and always in with the wrong one. The weather was bitterly cold: the men's hands were in their pockets, the girls shivered, but they were all taking their solace. This was the best music they could get: it seemed to soothe and refresh them. Oh, that I could have led those people to some near winter pavilion, or even a cold garden, where they could have walked about and heard a popular selection of tunes, an overture, anything, by a common but excellent German band. What good that would have done them! How they would have enjoyed it! And supposing that every Saturday they could look forward to it, admission twopence apiece, the men would be there with their wives and children; they would spend less on the whole family than they would have squandered on themselves in one drunken afternoon. They could meet their friends, have their chat and glass of ale, or cup of coffee, in the winter garden; they would go home sober; and being satisfied, recreated, having had their exercise and company, would be more likely to go to bed early than to get drunk late. Surely all this is better than boozing in public-houses.

Oh! what a vast, what a beneficent future has music in the time to come! Let its true power and use be once understood; let some one man who loves the people, and is willing to consult their tastes without pandering to them, open a promenade for the lower stratum of the population,

at a low price, on Saturday afternoon, and let us see the result. Let the musical part be under some fit and intelligent musical dictator, and let some able and sympathetic administrator, intimately and wisely in sympathy with the masses—a Miss Octavia Hill—organize the refreshments, the admissions by payment, the general distribution of tickets, passes, advertisements, accommodation, &c. Let this be tried fairly—at first, of course, with an outlay of charitable funds—and then I prophesy four things :—

1. It will soon be self-supporting.

2. It will have a definite and marked influence upon the crime and intemperance of the district.

3. It will promote thrift, and increase the sum, now lamentably small, of the people's wholesome pleasures.

4. It will become a national institution, and spread in a short time throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Then shall music, ceasing to be the luxury of the rich and the degradation of the poor, open the golden gates of a wider and a happier realm of recreation for the masses. In its wake might follow, under similar management, a regenerated and popular drama, pictorial exhibitions, short and systematic lectures to groups in separate alcoves, electrical experiments, the microscope, the telescope, and a thousand other elevating and instructive *séances*—to each *séance* one halfpenny apiece extra, or one penny to frank for the whole.

Once get the people together by the power of music, you can mould them; one closed chamber of their minds after another might be unlocked; and were the scheme conducted with ability, and carefully watched, we should soon hail the dawn of a new era of popular enlightenment and genial instruction combined with an almost boundless variety of accessible, innocent, and elevating enjoyment.

157. THE KEY.

Third Book.

CREMONA.

Third Book.

CREMONA.

I.

INTERLUDE
ON A NIGHT AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

158. MY VIOLIN.

IT would be strange if I had not a good deal to say about the violin. The toy of my childhood—the solace of my manhood—what it will be to my old age, should I ever come to that, I cannot say. It can never be less than a happy memory, and in the hands of others—for I cannot suppose I shall ever take it up again—a recurrent delight.

The second time I was invited to fill the position of Friday evening lecturer at the Royal Institution, in February 1880, I took for my subject, "Old Violins."

I had not thought much about the violin for several years, but this sudden return to my old love rekindled my enthusiasm. Numberless fragments of violin lore that I knew without having learned, facts that I supposed were familiar to everyone, but which I found few even suspected; views which seemed to me obvious, but which to others appeared fanciful, seemed to crowd upon my mind, and my great difficulty was to know what to select, not how many, but how few things I could say in my hour.

159. LATENT KNOWLEDGE.

I had noticed that very great men at the Royal Institution floundered about for half-an-hour over an introduction, laboured under a fatal incapacity to begin, and only towards the end of the hour, when it was time to leave off, really got under weigh. I think it was Mr. Bramwell (since knighted), the engineer, next whom I happened to sit at dinner one night, who said to me, "If you lecture at the Royal Institution, don't beat about the bush, begin at once." I planned my lecture for three quarters of an hour, giving myself the odd quarter for illustration and digression. First quarter, the Construction; second quarter, the History; third quarter, the Sound of the violin. I allowed my mind to brood over each division, and made fragmentary notes on occasion. I did not so much want to acquire information as to arrange what I knew—give it point, edge, and a setting.

160. GOOD ADVICE.

I went down and had a chat with Mr. Hill, of Wardour Street, who always seemed to me quite one of the old fiddle-makers *redivivus*. The sources of violin History are open to everyone in Vidal, Fétis, Hart, Engel, &c. I had used up some of these in my section on violins in *Music and Morals*, and as regards the Sound I thought I could rely on my own perception and experience. For two months before my lecture I lived much with great fiddles, and I had my own Cremona always with me, Mr. Amherst's very tender and delightful Nicolas Amati, as well as his venerable Gaspar violin, and Mr. Enthoven's famous Maggini. I took these down to the Isle of Wight, got them into condition, played upon them every day, compared them, handled them, thought about them. They kept me in the violin atmosphere, above all they kept my *eye* in. If you leave off looking at violins you soon get out of practice, you fail to see the subtle differences, you get like a tea-taster off his palate. To know fiddles and judge them you must be always looking at them. For a time, at least, I got my eye in by dwelling on the best models. I lost no opportunity of seeing great fiddles for the next two months; the Duke of Edinburgh showed me his; Mr. Adam showed me his, and allowed me to see and handle the Dolphin Strad. I carefully avoided looking at any inferior violin, so that my eye might be saturated with nothing but the curves and peculiarities of the great makers.

161. PREPARATION FOR THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

The collection with which I was able to decorate the semicircular table of the Royal Institution on the night of my lecture, was, I should think, as a collection, *unique*. I had about twenty of the finest fiddles in the world, representing the chief makers from DUIFFOPRUGCAR to BERGONZI, arranged in front of me. The DUKE OF LEINSTER'S colossal Gaspar bass, now in the South Kensington Museum, lay on the floor between me and the audience. Various fantastic viols lent me by the South Kensington stood on the right and left of me, and behind me was a yellow screen on which I inscribed, with a piece of coarse charcoal, the ground plan of the great square in Cremona, showing the houses of STRADIVARIUS, the GUARNERII, and AMATI, all close to one another. Another screen behind me reached the whole length of the theatre facing the audience, and represented the violin tribe and old viols great and small. A long roll diagram with the names and dates of the chief violin makers of Italy, France, and Germany ran at the top from end to end of the wall.

162. A RARE COLLECTION.

The theatre was crowded. I touched from time to time a few of the instruments to illustrate peculiarities of tone. The exquisite sweetness and freshness of the Dolphin "Strad." excited most admiration, and at the close of the lecture people crowded to the table to see, and, if possible, handle my gems. I dared not leave my post; my object was to get all the fiddles

163. PACKING UP.

into their cases rapidly—to allow them to be handled was no part of my programme, nor had I any permission for this from their owners. Before ever my curious hearers could get at the table, the Dolphin "Strad." had left the theatre, and the DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S violins, one of which belonged to the EMPEROR OF RUSSIA, were both in their cases.

. . . . . .

For a few precious days I had the guardianship of most of these gems. It was an anxious time. Some I kept in my bedroom, others in my study adjoining it, with locked doors; and even then I awoke several times each night, fancying something was wrong, and once, to satisfy myself, I got up about three o'clock in the morning and went to look at them in their cases. They were all resting quietly, more quietly than I could rest. When all the instruments were safe back in the hands of their respective owners, after the first pang at parting, I heaved a deep sigh of relief. The *Times* printed a short summary of the lecture, but I wrote it out afterwards at length for *Good Words* and I here give it *in extenso* substantially as it was delivered.

II.

OLD VIOLINS.

THE Construction, the History, the Sound of the violin, would make a romantic work in three volumes as sensational as, and far more instructive than, most novels. The very pine-wood smells good, to begin with. The forests of the Southern Tyrol, which now teem with saplings, when the old violins were made, from 1520 to 1750, still abounded in those ancient trees, so eagerly and often vainly sought out by modern builders, and which the old viol-makers found to possess the finest acoustic properties.

164. THE WOOD.

The mighty timbers were felled in late summer. They came in loose floating rafts from the banks of the Garda; they floated down the Mincio to Mantua. Brescia was in the midst of them. From Como they found their way to Milan, and from Lake Maggiore direct, *via* the Ticino and the Po, to Cremona.

What market days were those! What a timber feast to select from; and what cunning lovers and testers of wood were the old viol-makers, the fathers of the violin! The rough heaps of pine, pear, lemon, and ash, beloved of the Brescians—of maple and sycamore, preferred by the Cremonese—lay steaming dry and hard in a few hours beneath the sun of the southern Alps.

Before a beam was bought, the master passed his hand over the surface. He could tell by touch the density of its fibre. Then he would take two equal slips of deal and weigh them, and judge of their porousness. The very appearance of the wood would guide him to its probable vibrational powers. Then he would, perchance, before leaving the market, cut strips of equal length, and elicit their relative intensities by striking their tongues. He would often select for a definite purpose, looking for a soft, porous piece, or a specially hard and close-fibred grain—a certain appearance he would instinctively associate with rare acoustic properties. The seller would be eager to find the pieces, useless to other customers, invaluable to an ANDREAS AMATI, for he was sure that the viol-maker would buy what suited him at a long price. After the lapse of nearly two centuries, we can trace such favourite beams by peculiar stains, freckles, and grainings. When, after cutting up a dozen trees, once in two or three years a piece of fine acoustic wood was found, it was kept for the master's best work. The same pine-beam will crop up in the bellies of Stradivarius at an interval of years. Another can be traced in the violins of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and after his death CARLO BERGONZI got hold of the remnants of it, and we detect it by a certain stain in the fibre.

165. HOW TO SELECT IT.

The anxiety to retain every particle of a precious piece

of wood is seen in the subtle and delicate patching and repatching of backs and bellies. The seams are only discoverable by a microscope, so perfect is the cabinet work. How different from the modern maker at Madrid, whom Tarisio relates as having to repair a damaged Stradivarius, and, finding the belly cracked, sent it home with a brand new one of his own manufacture!

166. RARE PROPERTIES.

The properties of fine violin wood are very mysterious. Only to be surrounded by a selection of fine violins is an experience which cannot be forgotten. Sit in the room with them with your eyes shut, and, although you may not touch one of them, you will soon be aware of ghostly presences.

When I was preparing this Royal Institution lecture, I sat alone in my study the night before, surrounded by that matchless collection of instruments which it was my good fortune to exhibit the next evening in Albemarle Street, and the chief features of which I desire here to place on record. Such a series of types, from 1520 to 1740, has seldom been seen together. The violins weighed but a few ounces apiece, and were worth thousands of pounds in value. My doors were locked; no one but myself had access to that treasure house; the room was kept to an even temperature night and day, and on the floor in a long row, placed chronologically, lay these

167. A RARE COLLECTION.

mystic arrangements in pine and sycamore, which were known to imprison the true souls of Brescia and Cremona.

First a Duiffoprugcar of fabulous antiquity, about 1530, lent by Mr. Hill; a Gaspar di Salo tenor of old Brescia, lent by Mr. Hart; a Maggini, De Beriot's favourite maker (also Brescia), lent by Mr. Enthoven; an Andreas Guarnerius (my own); Nicolas Amati (Cremona), Mr. Tyssen Amherst, M.P.; a violin of the Steiner (German) school, Captain Champion; a Stradivarius, the property of the late Emperor Alexander II. of Russia, lent me by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh; another fine Stradivarius, also lent me by His Royal Highness; a fine Joseph Guarnerius (Cremona), lent by Mr. Hart; my own labelled Stradivarius, formerly the property of Colonel Newberry; a magnificent Venetian violoncello, a Montagnana in exquisite condition; a noble Gaspar double-bass, found in the bedroom of the late Tarisio, along with his dead body and the Messie violin and other priceless gems.

On the following night, the South Kensington added to my store Dragonetti's monster double-bass, some exquisite ancient viols of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and Mr. Adams lent me the Dolphin Stradivarius for which he gave £600.

In the silence of the night the room seemed full of whispers and hollow rustlings. I could not cough or move without these ghostly voices answering me, as from the catacombs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even

the old seasoned backs and bellies of unstrung violins are full of the strangest echoes, and Mr. Hill, the violin-maker, tells me that as he sits in his work-room, where old violin carcases are piled in hundreds on shelves and cupboards pell-mell, ribs, bellies, and backs, he constantly hears them muttering and humming to themselves, in answer to his tools, the stroke of his hammer, the sound of his voice.

168. VIOLIN ANATOMY.

Let us now look at the violin anatomically. It is a miracle of construction, and as it can be taken to pieces, put together, patched, and indefinitely repaired, it is almost indestructible. It is, as one may say, as light as a feather and as strong as a horse. It is composed of fifty-eight or seventy pieces of wood. Wood about as thick as a half-crown, by exquisite adjustments of parts and distribution of strain, resists for several centuries an enormous pressure. The Belly of soft deal, the Back of hard sycamore, are united by six sycamore ribs, supported by twelve blocks with linings.

It appears that the quick vibrations of the hard wood, married to the slower sound-waves of the soft, produce the mellow but reedy *timbre* of the good violin. If all the wood were hard, you would get the tone light and metallic; if all soft, it would be muffled and tubby.

There is every conceivable variety of fibre both in hard and soft wood. The thickness of back and belly is not uniform; each should be thicker towards the middle. But how thick,

and shaved thin in what proportions towards the sides? The cunning workman alone knows. As a rule, if the wood be hard he will cut it thin; if soft, thick; but *how* thin and *how* thick, and exactly *where*, is nowhere writ down, nor can be, because nowhere for handy reference are recorded the densities of all pine and pear and sycamore and maple planks that have or shall come into the maker's hands.

169. THE SOUND-BAR.

The Sound-bar is a strip of pine wood running obliquely under the left foot of the bridge. It not only strengthens the belly for the prodigious pressure of the four strings, whose direction it is made to follow, for vibrational reasons, but it is the nervous system of the violin. It has to be cut and adjusted to the whole framework; a slight mistake in position, a looseness, an inequality or roughness of finish, will produce that hollow teeth-on-edge growl called the "wolf."

It takes the greatest cunning and a life of practical study to know how long, how thick, and exactly where the sound-bar should be in each instrument. The health and *morale* of many an old violin has been impaired by its nervous system being ignorantly tampered with. Every old violin, with the exception of the "Pucelle," has had its sound-bar replaced, or it would never have endured the increased tightness of strings brought in with our modern pitch. Many good forgeries have thus been

exposed, for in taking the reputed Stradivarius to pieces, the rough clumsy work inside, contrasting with the exquisite finish of the old masters, betrays at once the coarseness of a body that never really held the soul of a Cremona.

170. THE SOUND-POST.

The Sound-post, a little pine prop like a short bit of cedar pencil, is the *soul* of the violin. It is placed upright inside, about one-eighth of an inch to the back of the right foot of the bridge, and through it pass all the heart-throbs or vibrations generated between the back and the belly. There the short waves and the long waves meet and mingle. It is the material throbbing centre of that pulsating air column, defined by the walls of the violin, but propagating those mystic sound-waves that ripple forth in sweetness upon ten thousand ears.

Days and weeks may be spent on the adjustment of this tiny sound-post. Its position exhausts the patience of the repairer, and makes the joy or the misery of the player. As a rough general rule, the high-built violin will take it nearer the bridge than the low-built, and a few experiments will at once show the relation of the "soul" to tightness, mellowness, or intensity of sound. For the amateur there is but one motto, "Leave well alone."

The prodigious strain of the strings is resisted first by the

arch of the belly; then by the ribs, strengthened with the
171. upright blocks, the pressure amongst which is
STRAIN OF STRINGS AND NECK. evenly distributed by the linings which unite them; and, lastly, by the supporting sound-bar, sound-post, and back. Many people, on observing the obvious join between the neck and the head of old violins, fancy that the *head* is not the original. It is the *neck* that is new. All the necks of old violins have thus been lengthened, and the old heads refixed, for the simple reason that CORELLI's finger-board will not do for PAGANINI, and mightier execution requires an ampler field for its eccentric excursions.

The Scroll, or head, fitted with its four simple screws of ebony, box, or rosewood, is the physiognomy of the violin.
172. At first all fiddle-heads look alike—as do all
THE SCROLL. pug-dogs, or all negroes, and, indeed, England, Wales, Italy, Holland, and most other countries have their general faces, so have violins,—but a practised eye sees the difference at a glance. Look for half-an-hour every day at a late Joseph Guarnerius, an early Nicolas Amati, and a grand pattern Strad., and you will be surprised that you could ever have confounded their forms. What is called the "throwing" of the scroll betrays the master's style like handwriting, and he lays down his type in every curve, groove, and outline. A keen eye can almost see the favourite tool he worked with, and how his hand went.

These subtleties are like the painter's "touch," they can hardly be imitated so as to deceive one who has mastered the individual work of the great makers.

173. THE FINGER-BOARD.

The ebony finger-board must be nicely fitted, as also the neck, to the hand of the player, on its even smoothness and true curve depends the correct stopping of the notes. You cannot, for instance, stop fifths in tune on a rough or uneven finger-board. The button to which the tail-piece is fastened is full of style, and not, like the pegs, a thing to be dropped and changed at will; it is a critical part of the violin, takes a good third of the leverage of the whole strain, is fixed like a vice, rooted in the very adamant of the wood, carefully finished, and cut round, pointed, or flat, according to the taste of the maker.

174. THE PURFLING.

The Purfling, more or less deeply embedded, emphasizes the outline of the violin. It is composed of three thin strips of wood, ebony, sometimes whalebone, the centre of two white strips; it is often more or less embedded, and betrays the workman's taste and skill. The double purfling and purfling in eccentric patterns of some of the old violins is very quaint, but a doubtful adjunct to the tone. But, strange to say, prior to 1600, appearances were more thought of than tone. The old guitars and viols are often so profusely carved or inlaid

with tortoiseshell, ivory, and silver, that they have but little sound, and that bad. I do not think that this has ever been noticed before, but it is undoubtedly a fact that attention to tone only dates from the rise of the violin proper in the sixteenth century, and is, in fact, coincident with the rise of the art of modern music.

175. THE VARNISH.

I come now to the Cremona varnish. What is it? About 1760 it disappeared, and never reappeared. All the Cremonas have it. Was it a gum or an oil, or a distillation from some plant, or some chemical once largely in use and superseded, as the old oil lamps have gone out before gas and paraffine? How was it mixed? Is the recipe lost? No one seems to be able to answer these questions definitely. There it lies like sunlit water, mellow, soft, rich; varying in colour —golden, orange, or pale red tint on the Guarnerius! rich gold, deep orange, or light red on the Stradivarius back—and when it rubs softly away rather than chips off hardly, like the German and French imitations, it leaves the wood seasoned, impregnated, and fit to resist heat, cold, and the all-destroying worm for ages. Mr. Charles Reade gives one account of the matter. He thinks the wood, cut in winter, varnished in the hot summer months, was first bathed several times in oil; thus, he says, were the "pores of the wood filled, and the grain shown up." The oil held in solution some clear gum. "Then

upon this oil varnish, when dry, was laid some heterogeneous varnish, namely a solution in spirit of some sovereign, high-coloured, pellucid, and, above all, tender gum." These gums were reddish yellow and yellowish red, and are accredited with colouring the varnish. On the other hand, it must be stated that, although the difficulties in the amber theory are great, Mr. PERKINS, the eminent chemist, has discovered amber in the varnish of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and he believes the colouring to be derived from a herb common throughout Piedmont, and, following out his conviction, MR. PERKINS has made a varnish which certainly does resemble very closely the Cremonese hue and gloss. DOD, who died in 1830, professed to have got the Cremona recipe, and whilst employing JOHN LOTT and BERNARD FENDT to make his violins, always varnished them himself; and, indeed, his varnish is very superior, and his violins are highly prized; but perhaps in a general description like this to discuss further the varnish theory would be superfluous.

176. THE BRIDGE.

The Bridge of the violin is to many a true Asses' Bridge; you may try and try again, and its true position will still be represented by an unknown x. It is but a small piece of hard boxwood, 2 inches by $1\frac{1}{2}$ in size, it is quaintly perforated, it clings closely to the violin's belly with its two little thin feet, is about as thick, where thickest, as a five-shilling piece, thinning steadily towards the top, which obeys the curve

of the finger-board and lifts the strain of the four strings. The bridge is movable; but it is so important and all-essential to the propagation of any sound at all, that it may be called the wife of the violin. All old violins have had many bridges in their time, but there is no reason why the union, if happy, should not last for forty or fifty years. A perfectly harmonious marriage is as rare between violins and their bridges as it is between men and women, though in either case there is a considerable margin for the gradual adjustment of temperaments. Although the old violin is very capricious in his choice, and often remains a widower for years, he does not object to elderly bridges, and when he finds one he can get on with, will obstinately resent any rash interference with the harmony of his domestic arrangements.

This is a point not nearly enough considered even by wise violin doctors and repairers. The heartless substitu-

177. THE SENTIMENT OF THE BRIDGE.

tion of raw young bridges for old and tried companions is common and much to be deplored, and a sensitive old Strad. will never cease to spar with the fresh, conceited, wayward young things, utterly incapable of entering into his fine qualities, and caring naught for his two hundred years of tonal experience; and the jarring and bickering go on until he gets rid of one after another and settles down, if not with his old favourite, at least with some elderly and fairly dessicated

companion. I do not believe in bridges being worn out. After a year or two the hard box-fibre yields very little under the cutting of the strings; there is a considerable margin for the shifting of the strings, and no string but the first will materially grind. Rather than change so precious a thing as a congenial partner, glue, mend, patch, repair her, just as you would her priceless old husband; if he is in the prime of life at about one hundred and fifty, she may well be a little made up at sixty or seventy. Thirty years ago my Stradivarius, 1712, grand pattern, came by gift into my possession. I soon found it did not get on with its bridge—a new, sappy, crude, thick thing, which seemed to choke and turn sour its mellow vibrations. About that time I received the present of a very old bridge from the violin of F. Cramer. It was delicate, exquisitely finished, evidently very old. I thought its build too slight, but clapped it on at once, and the old violin waked as out of a long sleep, like a giant refreshed with wine. It was then some time before I found exactly the right place, and for several years, on and off, I fidgeted about with the bridge. One day, in shifting it, I snapped it; but after trying other bridges, I glued the old one together, and once more the violin found its old sweetness and solace. Years passed, I left off playing, the Strad. lay neglected, got damp, and its joints loosened. I lent it to a cunning doctor; he "fixed it up" again, but sent it back with a new bridge, and sounding—well, like files and vinegar! I recovered the old bridge that he declared

now worn out. I restored it to its beloved husband, now only in his one hundred and seventy-first year, he received his lost wife with effusion, and I think the harmony made by the two was never more perfect than it is now. Truly *amantium* not *iræ*, but *separatio amoris integratio est.*

178. VIOLIN STRINGS.

A word about violin strings. The positive thickness of the strings depends upon the temperament and build of the violin, providing that the player's fingers are equal to thick or thin strings. Thick strings will mellow the screaminess of a Stainer—elicit the full tone of a Joseph Guarnerius or grand Strad., whilst the older violins of Brescia, and even the sweet Nicolas Amati, will work better with thinner strings; but in such matters the player must come to the best compromise he can with his fingers and his fiddle, for the finger will often desire a thin string when the fiddle cries out for a thick one. New violins as a rule will take thicker strings than the fine old sensitives of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Of the English, French, German, and Italian strings, the Italian are the best; and of the Italian, the Roman hard and brilliant, a little rough, and Neapolitan smooth, soft, and pale are preferred. Paduans are strong, but frequently false. Veronese are softer and deeper in colour. The Germans now rank next, and the white smooth Saxon strings are good substitutes for, but no rivals of, the Italians. The French firsts are brittle, the

Italian strings sound well, and the French patent fourth silver string, perfectly smooth and shining, is preferred by some soloists to the old covered fourth. The English strings, of a dirty green and yellow colour, are very strong, and good enough for hack work in the orchestra. The best and strongest strings are made from the intestines of spring lambs killed in September, and the superiority of the Italian over others is explained by the climate, for in Italy the sun does what has to be done artificially in more northern latitudes.

179. HOW TO CHOOSE STRINGS.

The demand for the interior of the September lamb being out of all proportion to the supply, there is a vast sale of inferior strings always going on at high prices. In string selection the objects are three:—

1. To suit the constitution of your instrument, and choose that thickness and quality of string which will develop tone with the greatest ease, roundness, and freedom.

2. To choose strings which will give good fifths—a matter sometimes a little dependent on the shape of your own fingers and the cut of your finger-board, but also controlled by the relative thickness of your strings.

3. To avoid false strings—an epidemic which rages incontinently amongst E violin strings—SPOHR's recipe for detection was to hold the string between the fingers and

thumbs, and if when he set it vibrating from one end to the other only two lines appeared, he decided that it was true; if a third, it was deemed false. Once on, however, there can never be any doubt.

180. VIOLIN FASCINATION.

It is only necessary to glance at the enormous variety of shapes that the viol tribe has assumed, both before and after the creation of the violin, to judge of the inexhaustible dominion which the conception seems to have exercised over the human mind. The collector who cannot play, and the player who cannot collect, are alike victims of this mania for violins. Of what interest can they be to the collector, who keeps dozens of them, unstrung and unmended, in cupboards and cabinets, and shows them about to his bewildered guests like old pots or enamels?

Look at a fine specimen or two, on and off, when you have the chance, and the mystery may possibly dawn upon you too.

There, in a small compass, lies before you such a wonder of simplicity, subtlety, variety, and strength as perhaps no other object of equal dimensions can possess. The eye is arrested by the amber gloss and glow of the varnish; the infinite grace of the multitudinous curves; the surface, which is nowhere flat, but ever in flowing lines, sunlit hollows of miniature hills and vales, irregular, like the fine surface of a perfectly healthy human body; its gentle mounds and

depressions would almost make us believe that there is a whole underlying system of muscle—a very living organism, to account for such subtle yet harmonious irregularity of surface. It is positively alive with swelling and undulating grace.

Then the eye follows with unabating ardour the outline—dipping in here or bulging there—in segments of what look like an oval or a circle, but which are never any part of an oval or a circle—but something drawn unmechanically like a Greek frieze—after the vision of an inward grace.

Its voice may be as fair as its form and finish; yet unstrung and silent, more truly can it be said of a violin than of any human creature, that "it is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever," for its beauty grows with the mellowness of age; its voice is sweeter as the centuries roll on, and its physical frame appears to be almost indestructible.

And the player—who is not always a judge of a genuine violin, but goes by the sound qualities which suit him—he naturally adores what is, within its limits, scientifically the most perfect of all instruments.

The four strings, of course, limit and define its harmonic resources—in combination and viewed collectively in the quartet alone is it able to compass the extended developments of harmony in bass, tenor, and treble clef, but as a tone-producing instrument it has no rival. It possesses *accent* combined with *sustained and modified tone.* The piano has accent, but little sustained and no modified tone;

the organ has accent, and sustained, but in a very imperfect sense, modified tone; the violin possesses in perfection all three. With the stroke of the bow comes every degree of *accent*; with the drawing and skilful *sostenuto* of up and down bowings the notes are indefinitely *sustained* to a degree far exceeding the capacity of the human lungs; whilst every pulse of emotion is through the pressure of the finger communicated to the vibrating string, and the tone trembles, shivers, thrills, or assumes a hard, rigid quality, passing at will from the variety of a whisper to a very roar or scream of agony or delight.

Can the soul of the musician fail to yield loving or utter allegiance to the sovereign power of the violin, which is so willing and ideal a minister of his subtlest inspirations—equal to the human voice in sensibility and expression, and far superior to it in compass, execution, variety, and durability?

181. VIOLIN HISTORY.

The violin is not an invention, it is a growth. It is the survival of the fittest. The undeveloped elements of the *genus* Viol, out of which grew the *species* Violin, are to be found latent in the rebek, the crowth, and the rotta. In the struggle for existence each succumbed, leaving only its useful and vital elements to be recombined.

The *rebek* bequeathed its rounded form pierced in the belly with two sound-holes, the bridge, tail-piece, screw-box, doubtless a sound-post, and that odd crook of a violin-

bow often seen in the hands of stone angels in cathedrals of the fourteenth century.

The *crowth* gives the all-important hint of the two vibrating boards joined by ribs; whilst from the *rotta*, or guitar tribe, comes the lower end, and the upper end comes from the rebek—the elongated neck separate from the body, the frets, which for one hundred and fifty years delayed the advent of the violin, and the two concave side-curves so needful for the manipulation of the bow. *Music and Morals* contains diagrams illustrating the genesis of the violin.

This Viol—of no particular size or settled shape, or rather of all shapes and sizes, usually with a flat back and round belly—was made in great profusion in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Anyone who will glance at the case of ancient viols in the South Kensington Museum will be surprised at the fancy and fertility of form displayed.

There was the Knee Viol, the Bass Viol, the Viol di Gamba, the Violone, and the Viol d'Amore. Some of these were inlaid with tortoiseshell and ivory, others eloborately carved and over-purfled—facts most interesting to the connoisseur, and marking a period when *cabinet-work* was at its zenith and *musical sound* in its infancy. Sound was the carver's humble servant. The well-known violin given by Queen Elizabeth to the Earl of Leicester, riddled through and through like Ceylonese furniture or a Chinese ivory junk, is quite

182. AN ELIZABETHAN VIOLIN.

absurd as a sound vehicle. By and by the carver and fine cabinet-worker would have to place all the treasures of their art at the disposal of music, and would not be allowed one join, or purfle, or pattern inimical to tone. I shall develop these hints later.

183. THE NUMBER OF STRINGS.

The variety and number of strings in these old Viols is often childish. It looks like (what it was) playing with newly-discovered resources—the real wealth of which it took two hundred years more to learn. If in bowed instruments you have more strings than fingers the hand with difficulty overlays them—of course in the guitar tribe the work is divided between ten fingers instead of four. In the Viol d'Amore an odd attempt was made to improve the *timbre* by a set of steel wires tuned sympathetically, and running beneath the gut strings. It took two hundred years to convince people that the *timbre* lay with the wood, not the wires; nor could the old masters see that tone would only arrive with an extended study in the properties of wood and a radical change of model.

184. VIOLIN EVOLUTION.

I showed some years ago in the *Contemporary Review* what it is difficult to trace step by step, but what we know must have been the history of the violin tribe in its earlier stages. I placed the lesson for the eye—showing how the smaller viols or violettes of the seventeenth century fell into the violins,

the larger ones into the Tenor, and the Viol di Gambas into the Violoncello. The double-bass, a genuine Viol, and the only one which retains its flat back, was made extensively by GASPAR DI SALO, and has been entirely adopted by the modern orchestra; indeed whilst innumerable other large viols are merely preserved as curiosities, the double-bass retains its ancient type, and in the BEETHOVEN and WAGNERIAN orchestra exercises an influence and prominence second only to the violin itself.

As we look intently at the confused nebulæ of sixteenth-century viols, we notice the modest constellation of the violins slowly detaching itself from that host of tubby stars which it was soon destined to supersede for ever. The rise of the violin tribe—by which of course I mean the *violin, tenor, violoncello,* and *double bass*—is, in fact, coincident with the rise of modern music. A definite art required a definite instrument—more mechanical, more constant, more reliable than the human voice.

185. THE VOICE AND THE VIOLIN.

Between CARISSIMI, 1570, and MONTEVERDE, 1672, the foundations of the art of modern music were laid by the discovery of the perfect cadence and the modern octave. With a system of fixed tonality the art began those strides of progress which in about two hundred years seemed to leave nothing new to be discovered. It first recast and used the human voice. The voice was noticed to fall naturally into treble, alto,

tenor, and bass, and was so organized in the singing schools of Pistocchi at Bologna in 1659.

Now the chief of the Amati worked from 1596-1684, and the division of violin, viola, violoncello and double-bass corresponded with tolerable closeness to the four divisions of the human voice, the rise of singing-schools, and the exigencies of the new musical art. The Procrustean bed upon which the poor viols of the period were now stretched forms one of the most interesting and instructive episodes in the history of the art. Viol di Gambas were converted into violoncellos, the viollettes enlarged and patched into violins, viols cut down—sadly, brutally cut down—into tenors. No lover of the art could help dropping a tear over a matchless specimen of Linarelli in 1400–1500, exhibited at South Kensington, which had been so cut down; and I could point to one or two viols now passing as Amati tenors which have received similar treatment and strut in borrowed plumes. The cabinet work is often so fine that only an experienced eye with the aid of a microscope can discern the joins and refittings beneath the new wash of dirty-brown varnish habitually used to conceal the deed. But all this only proves the imperative fitness of a new combination. We have at last arrived at the modern violin, and the reason of its natural supremacy. Its right to survive is clearly to be found in its perfect ministry to

186. TRANSFORMATION.

the art of modern music. I have dwelt upon its compass, which is to all intents and purposes unlimited, and its other especial merits are not far to seek.

187. FOUR STRINGS.

The number and the tension of the strings is the happy mean between the one or two strings of the Japanese or Persian fiddle and the many-stringed viol. Add a fifth string to the violin and the tension is not only too great, but unnecessary, for the E string will yield sound as shrill as the human ear can bear; add a string on the other side, and the tension will be too feeble to yield a good quality of sound. And similar remarks may apply to the tenor, violoncello, and double-bass; each is sufficient and complete, and where it ends its companion steps in to continue the varied function.

Each is distinct and full of character; the charm of variety is constitutionally involved. In each the strings are of different thicknesses, with different tensions, acting upon different vibrating surfaces, enclosing different-sized columns of air.

We pause for a moment with feelings of profound satisfaction and survey the violin kingdom of the past. This fourfold valuable selection—this crowning of violin, tenor, violoncello, and double-bass—has not been the work of any one man or age, or even country; it is the inexorable, empirical, yet logical outcome or evolution of thousands of experiments made in France, Germany, and Italy, by

hundreds of workers, extending over centuries of time, and resulting in the survival of the fittest.

Although DUIFFOPRUGCAR was certainly not an Italian, yet, coming from the Tyrol, he settled at Bologna, afterwards migrating to Lyons, in France, where he spent most of his life and died. He was undoubtedly one of the fathers, if not the father, of the violin. It has been questioned whether DUIFFOPRUGCAR ever made violins, but there is no reason for doubting that PALESTRINA played on a Duiffoprugcar violin, which is said to have borne this couplet :—

188.
THE ITALIAN SCHOOLS. 1520–1760.
DUIFFOPRUGCAR.

> Viva fui in sylvis, sum dura occisa securi
> Dum vixi tacui mortua dulce cano.

There is, besides, a large-sized violin bearing date 1539, said to be the only extant specimen; but lately, MR. HILL obtained from Lyons a very excellent and perfect specimen, which he believed to be an undoubted Duiffoprugcar, and which I exhibited at the Royal Institution. It is quaint, undecided, and antique in outline, the S's curiously cut, and the back over-purfled. When opened it was found backed with old canvas and oddly primitive in construction. It ought to be put under a glass-case in the South Kensington Museum. Indeed it is incredible, but true, that not a single museum in Europe that I know of has thought it worth while to procure specimens of the violin art from DUIFFOPRUGCAR to BERGONZI.

But it is not to Bologna or Lyons, but to Brescia, that we must look for the rise of the first great violin school.

Note first GASPAR DI SALO, who worked between 1550 and 1612. It has been my privilege to live for some weeks with MR. AMHERST'S fine old Gaspar di Salo. He was in splendid condition, still bulgy, but a notable and significant reduction from the old viol type, which GASPAR doubtless continued to make. The head is charmingly long and queer and antique. The idea of putting character and great finish into the scroll belongs to a later period. Human and animal heads were no doubt common enough in the place of a scroll; but they belong to the carving, cabinet-decoration, over-purfling period, when tone was second to ornament.

189. THE BRESCIAN SCHOOL. 1520–1620. GASPAR DI SALO.

As the great tone period approached, carving for the sake of carving was abandoned; ornament was kept simple, subordinate, but full of finish and avowedly the mark of sign-manual. The exquisite, yet unpretending and simple, scrolls of AMATI and STRADIVARIUS arose along with the rise of violin tone. But why such finish, such evident intention to be noticed, such distinct *cachet* and appeal to the eye? I think this is the natural explanation. As the art of violin-playing improved, violinists took to holding their fiddles well up, and to playing without notes; the head of the violin was thus

190. VIOLIN CARVING.

the first thing which caught the eye; whereas before there is every reason to believe that the old viol players held their instruments down, like bad orchestral players now, with violin scroll or head almost between their knees and *unseen.* That head might, indeed, be a finely-carved human head; but, if so, it could only be seen as an ornament when the violin was hanging up; it could only be seen, if at all, upside down when the violin was being played. Look at all old violins; they are rubbed by the beard on *both* sides. Now we never place the chin on the off-side—always on the in-side; but if a man has to crouch in dim churches over flickering oil lamps and scrape old chaunts, he will get slovenly, his violin-head will droop between his knees, and his chin will most naturally slip over the tail-piece and lie on the off-side, whilst his ear reposes on the tail-piece, and the top of his violin has a tendency to disappear over his left shoulder!

Compare this old slovenly method—inimical to tone, to style, to execution, and to grace—which buried the scroll—with the noble, upright pose of JOACHIM or NERUDA when playing, where the scroll is constantly thrown up, as if itself addressing the audience, and instead of looking upside-down or ungraceful, as would a human or animal head in that position, comes out towards you like the prow of an ancient galley, and impresses upon the eye, with every motion of the player's wrist, its fine *verve* and individual character.

Gaspar di Salo may almost be said to have invented violin tone. Mr. Tyssen Amherst's unique early Gaspar violin, with its long, pointed *f*-like black-letter sound-holes, although of the high model abandoned in later life, is surprising in tone, considering its build, which is generally supposed to favour a smothered and tubby sound. Although the first and fourth strings are rather rough, the whole is very sonorous and fresh, and the D and A strings very rich and pure. We must not look for the finish of the Amatis at this early period. The build of this early Gaspar is round and full, both in back and belly, and the chisel has gone wrong more than once in the back grooving, whilst the purfling is not good. Probably one and the same cunning workman has repaired the purfling in places, patched the head, and positively mosaiced the worn-out screw-box, and, alas! carried a brown varnish over several parts of the instrument, through which the rich golden tints of Gaspar still peep, and almost dazzle the eye. Still, whoever has put on the new neck has worshipped at the shrine of old Gaspar; he has made his purfling a little too good, left a little too much of his glue and his brown varnish; but his patched head is such a masterpiece, such care and labour to keep every line of Gaspar—except on one side of the screw-box, where about two inches of line is new—but the join so good as only to be seen under a microscope.

191. A famous Gaspar described.

All this, when one lives with a fiddle, one gets to notice

and to love, whilst the uninitiated, standing by in bewilderment, may well feel tempted to order the violin and the connoisseur off to the nearest lunatic asylum.

MAGGINI (GIOVANNI PAOLO), 1590–1640, of Brescia, followed GASPAR, but carried farther the art of rich, clear tone.

192. G. P. MAGGINI.

It is the glory of the Brescians to have hit upon this secret, lost as soon as found, that for tone —good round tone—the belly and back must be brought down flatter upon ribs of diminished height. MAGGINI's violins, though lacking in some of the quaint grace of GASPAR (especially his double-basses), approach the perfected Cremona model of the later rather than the earlier days; his scroll is grooved and finished; his sound-holes are still the long black-letter SS; the varnish rich brown or yellow. He is often confounded with BARAK NORMAN, or, still worse, with any obscure German imitator who has chosen to a little over-purfle and inlay his back. The Brescians MARIANI, VENTURINI, BUDIANI, MATEO BENTE, cannot further be alluded to here; in time they will all be treasured more as antiquities than as tone masters.

193. THE CREMONA SCHOOL. 1550–1740

The hotter suns and splendid river supplying the fine wood-market, and the commercial prosperity enjoyed by Cremona, seem now to have attracted and fixed the manufacture of the violin; and there was now a growing demand, not only from all

the churches but also throughout the palaces of Italy. We must ever view that central square of Cremona, where stood the Church of St. Dominic, with feelings of the deepest interest. Standing opposite the façade on our right hand lies the house of the AMATI; there worked ANDREW, the founder of the school, making, in 1550, close copies of the Brescians, GASPAR and MAGGINI.

There were the boys, ANTHONY and JEROME, who afterwards made jointly those violins so much sought after; but oddly enough reverted to the tubbier model, and over-grooved the sides of their bellies and backs, thinning their tone, until the genius of JEROME discerned the error and reverted to the Brescian type.

194. THE AMATI.

Here was born the great NICOLAS AMATI, 1596–1684, who struck out his own model, flattened, and in his best time scarcely retaining a trace of the vicious side-groove of the earlier Amatis.

On the same work-bench, as students in the school of the immortal NICOLAS, sat ANDREW GUARNERIUS and the incomparable STRADIVARIUS, finishing their master's violins and copying for years his various models with supreme skill and docility.

Almost next door, probably on the death of NICOLAS AMATI, STRADIVARIUS set up his shop, opposite the west

front of the big church; there for fifty years more he worked with uninterrupted assiduity; and next door to him the family of the GUARNERII had their work-rooms, and in that little square were all the finest violins made in the short space of about one hundred and fifty years. The body of STRADIVARIUS lies in the Church of the Rosary, not a stone's-throw from his own house; and so these great men died, and were buried, working in friendly rivalry, and leaving their echoes to roll from pole to pole.

195. THE GUARNERII AND STRADIVARIUS.

I have a delicate ANDREW GUARNERIUS of 1665, which shows admirably the transition between the full form of the earlier Amatis and the superior flat model of NICOLAS AMATI.

It was made, doubtless, under the eye of NICOLAS, and perhaps criticised by STRADIVARIUS, who probably worked at the same bench and shared ANDREW's glue-pot.

In my ANDREW GUARNERIUS the drooping Brescian corners have vanished, and the lower angles are turned up sharp; but the middle lengths fail to attain the pleasantly balanced curves and the graceful upper width and freedom of MR. AMHERST's later Nicolas Amati, of 1676, a true gem, despite the apparent plainness of the back.

ANDREW GUARNERIUS has also quite got rid of the rough, coarse, thick Brescian S, which was always ugly and too wide, and in its place the eye is rejoiced to find a lovely

and delicately rounded S, unlike at top and bottom, but only a shade less graceful than the freehand writing of Nicolas himself.

196. THE GREAT NICOLAS.

The great Nicolas (1596–16?4) began to change his model, reverting to the later Brescian in all but his sound-holes and two curves, about 1625. His violins increased in size, and would have increased in power, had it not been for a remnant of the early Amati side-grooving, which is said to thin the tone. The dip from the foot of the bridge is thought to be too great, but the upper part of the grand pattern is truly noble. Some of his scrolls have been criticised as too small and contracted, but there is nothing of this in a 1676 specimen before me; and although the corners are pointed and highly elegant, there is nothing weak; yet the whole is full of feminine grace.

The varnish, when not as is usual rubbed off, inclines to light orange with clear golden tints. The tone is so sweet and sensitive that it seems to leap forth before the bow has touched the strings, and goes on like a bell long after the bow has left them. To a fine Joseph Guarnerius you have sometimes to lay siege and then you are rewarded, but the Nicolas Amati is won almost before it is wooed.

The incomparable Antonius Stradivarius, or Stradi-

VARI, lived between 1644–1737. His latest known violin bears date 1736, and mentions his age, ninety-two. He worked without haste and without rest. His life was interrupted only by the siege of Cremona in 1702. But his art knew no politics, and the foreign courts of Spain and France were quite as eager to get his violins as the GOVERNOR OF CREMONA, or the DUKE OF MODENA.

197. STRADIVARIUS.

Up to about 1668 he was simply the apprentice of NICOLAS; we find scrolls and sound-holes cut by the pupil on the master's violins. He even made and labelled for NICOLAS.

In 1668 he leaves his master's shop and sets up for himself. But for thirty years this consummate student, whilst making every conceivable experiment with lutes, guitars, and violins, practically copied closely the best models of NICOLAS AMATI.

Still we notice that from 1686–1694 his sound-holes begin to recline, his form grows flatter, his curves extended, his corners tossed up and pointed, the scroll bolder, varnish inclining away from the browns and light orange to the rich yellows and light reds. Notice the way in which his purfling at the corners, like a little curved wasp's sting, follows no outline of the violin, and is not in the middle of the angle, but points freely towards the *corner* of the angle. What *chic*! as the French say.

In 1687 the master makes his long pattern—not really

longer, but *looking* longer because of the contracted sides. The Spanish Quatuor, inlaid with ivory, illustrates the fancy and skill of the workman—as did also an exquisitely carved lute by STRADIVARIUS, exhibited at the South Kensington Museum.

It was not until STRADIVARIUS had entered upon his fifty-sixth year that he attained his zenith and fixed his model, known as the grand pattern.

Between 1700 and 1725 those extraordinary creations passed from his chisel, even as the master-pieces on canvas passed from the brush of RAPHAEL.

The finest of these specimens—like that possessed by MR. ADAMS, the Dolphin, and by MR. HART, the Betts Strad.—fetch from £300 to £1,000.

To try and describe these instruments is like trying to describe the pastes, glazes, and blues of Nankin China.

198. A SPECIMEN DETAIL.

Beneath the tangible points of outline, scroll, character, and variety of thickness and modification of form, dependent on qualities of wood known to the master, there lie still the intangible things which will hardly bear describing, even when the violin is under the eye—one might almost say under the microscope. A rough attempt by contrast may be made in detail. Take but one detail for the benefit of the general reader, the inner *side curves* and angles of the middle boughts.

In Gaspar and Maggini those curves are drooping at the corners, longish and undecided in character; in Duiffo-prugcar it amounts almost to a wriggle. Nicolas Amati balances the top and bottom of his hollow curve with a certain mastery, but it still has a long oval sweep, with a definite relation of balance between the top and the bottom angle. Having mastered this sweep, Stradivarius begins to play with his curves and angles. He feels strong enough to trifle, like a skilled acrobat, with the balance. He lessens the oval, and tosses up his lower corner with a curious little crook at the bottom; the top angle towers proudly and smoothly above it, yet it is always graceful—delicious from its sense of freedom, almost insolent in its strength and self-confidence. There is a touch about Stradivarius here as elsewhere; it is that which separates the great masters everywhere from their pupils—Raphael from Giulio Romano, Paganini from Sivori, Stradivarius from Carlo Bergonzi. The freedom of Stradivarius becomes license in Carlo Bergonzi and over-boldness in Joseph Guarnerius; for, although the connection between Joseph and Stradivarius has been questioned, to my mind it is sufficiently clear.

199. THE END OF STRADIVARIUS.

Although Stradivarius made down to the last year of his life, still after 1730, feeling his hand and sight beginning to fail, he seldom signed his work. We can catch one, and only one, glimpse

of him as he lived and moved and had his being at Cremona in 1730, Piazza Domenico. Old POLLEDRO, late chapel-master at Turin, describes "ANTONIUS, the lute-maker," as an intimate friend of his master. He was high and thin, and looked like one worn with much thought and incessant industry. In summer he wore a white cotton night-cap, and in winter one of some woollen material. He was never seen without his apron of white leather, and every day was to him exactly like every other day. His mind was always riveted upon his one pursuit, and he seemed neither to know nor to desire the least change of occupation. His violins sold for four golden livres apiece, and were considered the best in Italy; and as he never spent anything except upon the necessaries of life and his own trade, he saved a good deal of money, and the simple-minded Cremonese used to make jokes about his thriftiness, and the proverb passed, "As rich as STRADIVARIUS."

A traveller who lately visited his house, still standing in the square of Cremona, remarked that it was heated through with the sun like an oven. He said you might sit and sweat there as in a Turkish bath. That was how the Cremona makers dried their wood, and so it was their oils distilled slowly and remained always at a high temperature, their varnish weltered and soaked into the pine bellies and sycamore backs beneath the tropical heat of those seventeenth century summers!

JOSEPH ANTHONY GUARNERIUS DEL GESU $\overset{+}{\text{IHS}}$ (1687–1745) towers a head and shoulders above the other illustrious GUARNERII, viz. ANDREW and JOSEPH, his sons, PETER, brother of JOSEPH (*son*), PETER OF MANTUA, son of "JOSEPH *Filius* ANDREÆ." The loud and rich tone of the later Joseph del Gesu violins makes him the formidable rival of STRADIVARIUS. PAGANINI preferred his Joseph, now in the Municipal Palace of Genoa, to all others.

200. THE GREAT JOSEPH.

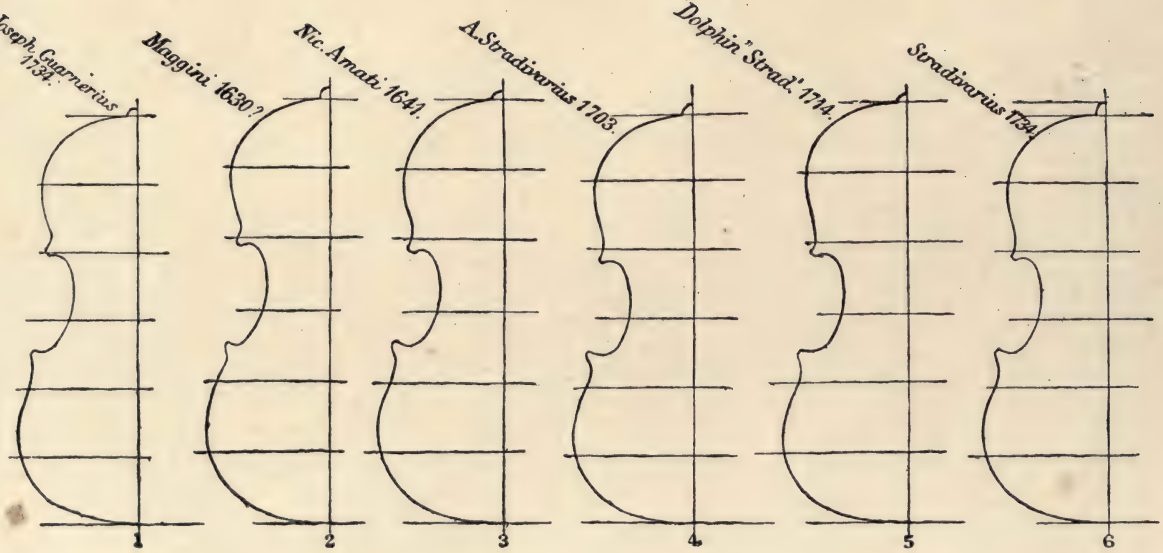
Who was JOSEPH'S master? The idea that JOSEPH, or anyone who lived either in AMATI'S or GUARNERIUS'S house—AMATI on the right, GUARNERIUS on the left of STRADIVARIUS, in the same square at Cremona—was entirely unaffected by the great man's influence, has always seemed to me absurd. That influence has been denied as vehemently in late years as it used to be formerly taken for granted. Still, the great JOSEPH is claimed as the pupil of JOSEPH, son of ANDREW—that ANDREW who sat by the side of STRADIVARIUS in NICOLAS AMATI'S workshop. With this I find no fault; but if the influence of STRADIVARIUS cannot be seen in the earlier Josephs, the later Josephs show undoubted signs of the master, who between 1700 and 1730 had eclipsed all his predecessors. In some details JOSEPH'S undoubted reversion to Brescian influence, and that early, is interesting—the flat model, the long sound-holes, and, it must be added, often the rough work.

Still, in JOSEPH's middle period there occurs that very high finish which reminds one of STRADIVARIUS. The elegance of the Strad. scroll is never attained, perhaps not even aimed at. The Josephs of about 1740 are most in request. They are large and massively made, the wood of finest acoustic property, the Brescian sound-hole toned down and rounded more like STRADIVARIUS. A fine genuine violin of this period will not go for less than two hundred guineas, and four hundred would not be an out-and-out price. The GUARNERIUS head or scroll is often quaint and full of self-assertion. The violin has the strongest make, temper, and stamp; the fourth string is often as rich as a trumpet. His last period is troubled by certain inferior violins called prison fiddles. The tale runs that JOSEPH was imprisoned for some political offence, and was supplied with refuse wood by the gaoler's daughter. The prison fiddle is a boon to forgers; their bad fiddles pass freely for interesting "prison JOSEPHS."

With CARLO BERGONZI (1718–1755) and GUADAGNINI (1710–1750) the great Cremona school comes to an end.

201. THE END OF THE CREMONESE SCHOOL.

The very varnish disappears, the cunning in wood-selection seems to fail the pale reflectors of a dying art, and the passion for vigour and finish has also departed. If I have in the above remarks omitted great names like RUGERIUS, CAPPA, ALBANI, MONTAGNANA (Cremona and Venice), it is because


Joseph Guarnerius 1734.
Maggini 1630?
Nic. Amati 1641.
A. Stradivarius 1703.
"Dolphin" Strad. 1714.
Stradivarius 1734
1
2
3
4
5
6

I am dealing with characteristics more than with men, and have used my men, not in catalogue, but as landmarks in art. As the greatest masters grow rare, the secondary stars cannot fail to rise annually in value.

202. FLORENCE, BOLOGNA, ROME.

The violin, although it culminated, is not exhausted at Cremona; but it would lead me into a new branch of my subject to deal with the other schools. These, after all, are but reflections, more or less pale or perfect, of the incomparable Cremonese masters. Florence, Bologna and Rome (1680–1760) may be briefly summarised under the names of GABRIELLI, F.; TONONI, B.; and TECHLER, R. Venice (1690–1764) claims D. MORTAGNANA (famous for his violoncellos), and SANCTUS SERAPHINO. Naples (1680–1800) boasts of the families of TESTORE, the GAGLIANO, and GRANCINO. Milan owns to C. F. LANDOLPHUS, a very capital maker, rapidly rising in estimation (1750). He was a pupil of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and beware of his clever imitations; beware still more of those vulgar red imitations (from which even Gillott's collection was not quite free), perpetrated on many a passable LANDOLPHUS, to make him look like a GUARNERIUS DEL GESU.

Passing to the French school (1610–1880) we note the fathers of it—MEDARD (1610), BOQUAY and PIERAY (1700–1730), DE COMBRE (1730–1760), and, greatest of all,

LUPOT and PIQUE. These two last men, in all but their silicate varnish, which chips rather than rubs, made consummate copies of STRADIVARIUS; their violins improve every year. To the late M. VUILLAUME is due the merit of almost recreating a taste for fine violin patterns, not only by his diligent research and collection, but by his admirable studies in the workshop and attention to detail. CHANOT and GAND are also excellent devotees of the lost art. The awful Mirecourt laboratory sends forth annually waggon-loads of Cremonas, boiled, cleaned, rubbed, and otherwise withered with apparent age. They smell as badly as they sound. The immortal LUPOT—greatest of French masters—did not boil and dry in ovens and cook with acids his woods; he copied fair and varnished full, and time is now doing for him what it will never do for the revolting shams of Mirecourt. In fifty years LUPOT will rank little below STRADIVARIUS himself in tone; his roughness of timbre is even now rapidly mellowing, and his sweet brilliancy is rather suggestive of the clear ringing sweetness of the Strad. than the loud rich roundness of the JOSEPH DEL GESU.

203. THE FRENCH SCHOOL.

In passing to the German School (1621–1800, &c.), the two M. ALBANIS of Botzen—one M. of Gratz and a P. of Cremona—are not to be confounded with the Palermitan E. ALBANI, pupil of N. AMATI. Setting aside the FENDTS and LOTTS, who worked in

204. THE GERMAN SCHOOL.

England, there is but one German name paramount. It is JACOBUS STEINER (1680 and onwards)—he was unhappily deeply infected with round viol 'tub' model with the worst of side scoops. After visiting Cremona his form improved, but never attained to the late MAGGINI, much less to the later NICOLAS type. His workmanship at the best is superb; his varnish green yellow or green brown—often spoiled by being rewashed and oiled by modern cooks—his tone piercing, not to say screaming; but in every way STEINER is so strong and so full of character that his very defects were idolised; he fascinated his age, and his mistakes corrupted the violin model in England and retarded the progress of Cremonese form here for about one hundred years.

205. THE ENGLISH SCHOOL.

Passing to the English School, we have to note that (like the French), the Brescian and Cremona makers were at first copied up to the days of BARAK NORMAN (1688–1740), when, the French remaining true to Cremona, the STEINER mania seized upon England; but although DUKE (1768) and others leaned much to the STEINER model, there certainly never was a time in England when the Italian school had not its eager copyists, and our BANKS (BENJAMIN) 1727—95, may even be called the English AMATI. During the last half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries the DUKE mania in England raged so furiously that hardly a respectable kitchen in the land, not to speak

of the beer-shop, was without its Duke violin. The DUKE label was as recklessly forged here as the STEINER label in Germany. A fine DUKE will always fetch money; but fine DUKES are not very common, although the market is choked with the name.

With regret I now quit what I hope has been an instructive as well as an interesting field of observation. The prospect opens before me as I close, and I feel positively oppressed with the number of really good names I have been unable even to allude to consistently with my prescribed limits. The Cremona Sound, the Cremona Connoisseur, the Forger, the Fiddle Market, are still so many untouched chapters, and each of the violin schools here rapidly summarised would amply repay separate attention.

Perhaps the following mems. may be useful to the general reader, and I note them briefly in conclusion.

206. TONE QUALITIES.

Duiffoprugcar, Bologna and Lyons, 1540 (?) interesting as an antique; without much character; weak tone; strings unequal in quality.

Gaspar di Salo, of Brescia, 1560—1610; powerful viol tone, muffled; but full, round, loud tone in his later flat models.

G. P. Maggini, of Brescia, 1590—1640; crisper, clearer, and as powerful.

Nicolas Amati, of Cremona. 1596—1684; very sweet and

sensitive; fourth string weak, but otherwise even and very smooth in tone; deficient in power.

Stradivarius, of Cremona, 1644—1737; clear, sweet, bell-like, and at the same time round and full; exceptional in combining such qualities with a certain rich sensitiveness; not thin like Amati, nor gruff like Gaspar, nor coarse as Joseph Guarnerius del Gesu is *sometimes*.

Joseph Guarnerius del Gesu, of Cremona, 1683—1745; often louder than Stradivarius; full, rich, powerful, and when in order, and kept so, sensitive and responsive; often fractious and husky if the least neglected. For solo playing the choice lies between Stradivarius and Joseph Guarnerius.

Jacobus Steiner, German, 1620; piercing, and when not screaming, then sweet and very fascinating, when the ear gets accustomed to it; fourth string wanting in roundness; first string as shrill and keen as a fife. In the following picked catalogue I have italicised the greatest makers.

ITALIAN SCHOOLS.

Brescia, 1520—1620.

Gaspar di Salo, 1560—1610.
G. P. Maggini, 1590—1640.

Cremona, 1550—1760.

Andreas Amati, 1520—1580.
Jerome and Anthony Amati, 1570—1635.
Nicolas Amati, 1596—1684.

Stradivarius, 1644—1737.

Joseph Anthony Guarnerius del Gesu, $\overset{+}{\text{IHS}}$, 1683—1745.

Carlo Bergonzi, 1718—1755.

Florence, Bologna, and Rome, 1680—1760.

Gabrielli, F.; Techler, R.; The Tononis, B. [Duiffoprugcar], 1510—30.

Venice, 1660—1764.

D. Montagnana.

Sanctus Seraphino. G. Tononi.

Neapolitan, 1680—1800.

Grancino Family. Testore Family.

Gagliano Family and F. Landolpho.

French School, 1610—1875.

Medard, 1610.

Bouquay, Pieray } 1700—1730.

De Combre, 1730—1760.

Lupot, Pique } 1758—1824.

Vuillaume, 1799—1875.

German School, 1621—17—.

Albani, 1621—1680 (?).

Jacob A. Steiner, 1620— —.

Klotz, 1670—1700.

English School, 1620—1832.

Wise & Rayman, 1620 – 1650.
Barak Norman, 1688—1740.
Banks, 1727—1795.
The Forsters, 1739—1808.
Duke, 1768, &c.
The Fendts, 1756—1832.

III.

INTERLUDE

ON A CERTAIN LOAN COLLECTION.

THE following meditation suggested by the famous oan exhibition of violins in 1872, forms a natural sequel to my Royal Institution lecture. A few of the same allusions will be now repeated; but I did not think it worth while to mar the unity of the chapter as it stands by suppressing them; they occur in a different connexion, and are marshalled for a separate purpose. I could not introduce into the previous lecture, delivered before the Royal Institution, the additional facts here dealt with short of prolonging a discourse already over prolix, nor could I omit the old allusions without impairing the setting of some of the material connected with violin history as it stands related to certain special gems of the loan collection. I will therefore conclude my violin dis-

207. RELATION TO THE PREVIOUS DISCOURSE.

sertations with a few reflections made several years ago in the presence of a very interesting but mixed collection of violins. This was my dream at South Kensington.

IV.

A SOUTH KENSINGTON DREAM.

In the clear light through the diaphonous cabinets entirely composed of plate-glass, at the South Kensington Museum, such violins and specimens of the Viol tribe were to be seen exhibited in the year 1872, as in all probability were never before brought together at any one time. In a space of a few square yards, I could lose my way for hours. I pause, for instance, at a case full of strange, uncouth, and yet elaborately finished viols called Viols di Gamba, Viols di Bardone, Viols d'Amore; I am carried back to a time when the violin proper was still in obscurity, when Gaspar di Salo (1560–1610) was struggling into notice with his thin-sided and tubby-stomached violins proper, which look to us so graceless, and yet which in reality sounded those notes of progress which were shortly afterwards caught up by his pupil, Maggini, until they swelled into the sweet tones of the Amatis, and the full, powerful sound torrents of Stradivarius and the Guarnerii.

208. BEHIND GLASS.

Turning from the dusky varnish and uncouth shapes of the ancient viols, my eye is caught by the sharp and delicate outline, and the polished agate splendour of a Cremona violin in the next case. A century has been quickly traversed, not so much that viols ceased to be made in 1720 as that the violin of that date could not possibly have been made in the 1620 period, from which we have just emerged. Then my curiosity is excited for a moment by one of those graceful pear-shaped lutes so common in sentimental pictures. It is also by the great STRADIVARIUS. His, and all other lutes, have long since gone out—at best they were poor things; yet this specimen, exquisitely carved with a rich, heavy, full-lipped Italian face, as a head—a splendid Satyr and Dryad curling around the neck, and every detail of grooving and purfling as perfect as in one of the great violins worth 300 guineas—all this tells of an age when beneath Italian skies, on Venetian balconies, or from black, loose-curtained gondolas, the sound of the lute struck by fair or chivalrous fingers constantly floated over the shallow lagoons of the Adriatic, and was, doubtless, of all others, the sound most loved of knights and ladies.

209. CREMONA CARVING.

But I must pause on the threshold. I shall return to this interesting loan exhibition; I shall try and point out what were its beauties, without attempting to disguise its weak places; but in con-

210. I REVERT TO VIOLIN HISTORY.

nexion with this violin meditation I desire to recall to the reader, at the risk of being accused of repetition, several facts and details which will show how large and important a part the violin has played in the development of the musical art, and if, in again alluding to the rise and progress of the violin, I shall seem to omit anything of importance, I must refer my readers to my preceding Royal Institution lecture and a chapter on STRADIVARIUS, in *Music and Morals*, where I have dwelt at some length upon the general construction of the violin.

211. SKETCH OF VIOLIN PROGRESS.

The violin, as I have already pointed out, had to wait upon time. Its destinies, like those of music, up to a certain point, were unprogressive—after that point, let us say 1530, its triumphal march to 1730 was rapid and irresistible. Yet it is curious to notice how slowly the great obstacles to its perfection were surmounted. Something like a viol seems to have been in existence for centuries before the model attained to anything like its present shape, yet until it attained that shape no real progress from barbarous scraping and weak tubby sounds towards real music was possible. It is true that the instrument kept pace with the development of music, which was at first slow enough. The oblong box, with one or more strings, and an almost flat bridge, could yield nothing but rasping and twanging discord. Yet it was not until melody was wedded to an improved notation that the

merits of curved bridges and scooped-out violin sides became obvious. Without these it is, of course, next to impossible to play on one string without sounding the others.

Then for how many years did the odious guitar frets last! Several old viols in the South Kensington Museum have them still; indeed, we believe that the manufacture of them was not extinct even in the middle of the eighteenth century. But what limitations they imposed upon the player; how they cramped his art; how they made him lean upon props which every violinist now scorns, even to learn his art by; above all, how they defeated the innate and subtle perfection of the violin by preventing the player from taking quarter-tones, or gliding up through imperceptible intervals; all which fine and thrilling qualities belong to the perfectly smooth and unmarked finger-board alone. What an indescribable charm has that smooth ebony plate for the true artist! We have heard people describe their raptures upon surveying the cool ivory and ebony keys of a grand piano; but such raptures are poor compared with those of the violin lover as he takes up his instrument and looks through the four strings at the black ebony finger-board upon which absolutely nothing is visible, and yet which is ready at any moment to measure for him to a hair's breadth the intervals of his delight. The mystery is hidden, and yet to the cunning player it is an open secret—effects of which he has often proved the

212. FRETS AND FINGER-BOARDS.

potency sleep along that inclined plane—myriads of swift notes are ready to rush forth and greet him, as his fingers slide up and down it. Weird harmonics will steal forth at certain spots over which his finger broods without pressure, yet with a sensitive and thrilling touch as though feeling stronger contact too close for the bell-like sweetness desired, and seeking rather to draw it forth by the magic of some electric sympathy. Yet there is no hint or trace of the true intervals upon the smooth finger-board: like the opening and shutting of a door with a glimpse into Paradise; like the myriad tints upon broken water vanishing into the dark transparent monotint, when the light on the wave is gone; so the ebony board, lately the arbiter of such changeful melodies, sleeps silent, expressionless, the instant the busy fingers are still. But what foul orgies of sound lie also within its range when tampered with, used ignorantly, or abused. What false and hateful intervals, what gross screams, what wicked capabilities of perverting sound!

Well, half the violin's powers for delight or pain, for good or evil, were for centuries destroyed by the use of frets. The abolition of frets is not only the emancipation, it is the creation, of the violin finger-board. Then, again, how long was it before it became evident that for all practical purposes four strings, and only four, were quite as many as could be strung upon any instrument of the viol tribe with due regard to tone, and pitch, and con-

213.
THE VIOL D'AMORE.

venience. Take a violin and add a fifth string to the bass; you must stretch it too loosely for an effective resonance, or add one to the treble, and it is superfluous as well as inconvenient—superfluous because we can get on the E string notes as shrill as the human ear can recognise, and inconvenient because any string tuned a fifth above the E string, would be always snapping, and would probably by its horrible tension at last pull the bridge through the belly. No one can walk through the permanent collection of ancient stringed instruments at the South Kensington Museum without realising the point of these observations. Yet Viols di Gamba were made habitually with six strings, stupidly tuned at intervals of a third, tension low, sound tubby; instead of four strings tuned in fifths, high tension, sound bright. And at one time almost any number of strings more were added by the caprice of makers, or the senseless fancy of virtuosi. One limited use of several strings, and one only, commends itself to us in instruments of the Viol da Braccio, or large tenor make, namely, the production of arpeggios. Some years ago a gentleman in M. JULLIEN'S band played beautifully on a viol of this kind. He called it, if we remember rightly, by the old name of Viol d'Amore. The effect produced was exceedingly soft and lovely. The movement consisted of successions of sweeping and beautifully harmonised arpeggios, effective beyond anything that could be produced in that style on four strings. He played upon six, if not more.

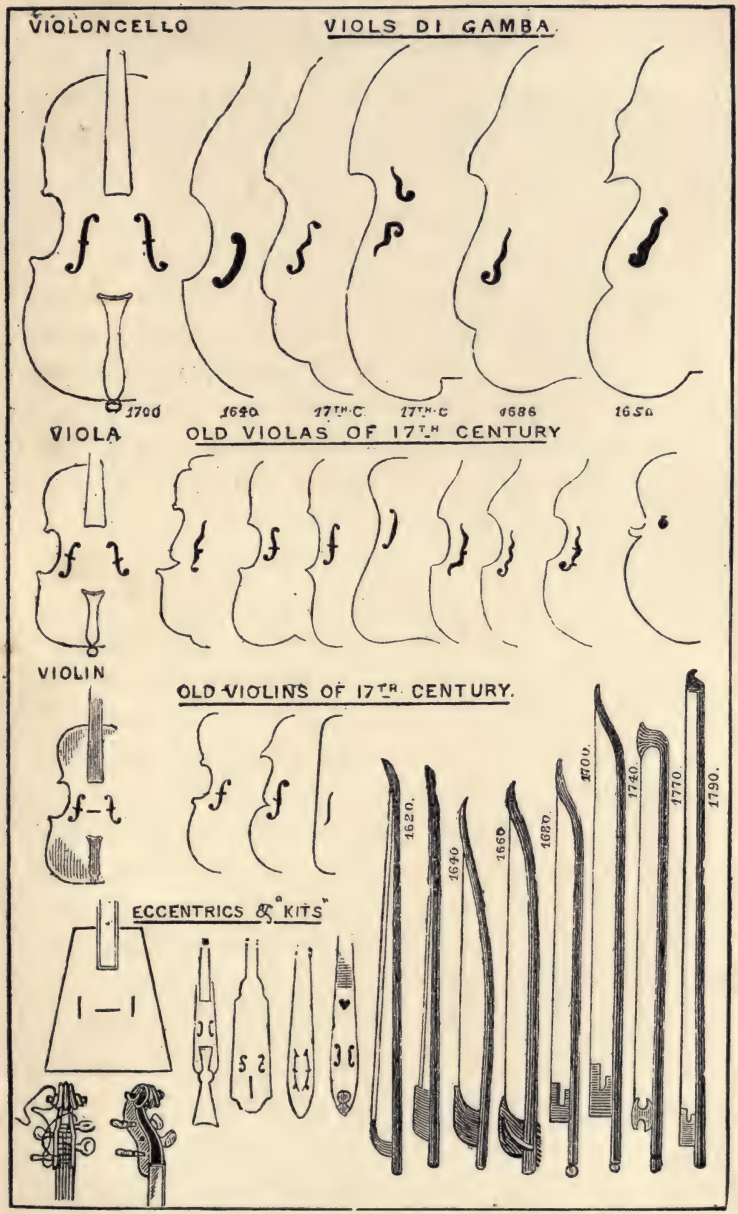
Another quite extinct device consists of a series of sympathetic steel wire strings stretched underneath the bridge or on one side of it, in some cases through it, from neck to tail-piece, and tuned to the same notes as the normal gut strings above them. When these last were struck the steel strings vibrated, harmonically as well as normally, and must have produced a kind of mixture as when a piano is played without dampers, or with a loud pedal down, or, as when a carillon is set agoing, and the notes run into each other because there is nothing to check their vibrations. Some sensuous effects unknown to us were doubtless produced in this way; but everything which tends to promote an unregulated echo is destructive of music proper, just as much as a sound-board which keeps echoing a speaker's voice is to that extent destructive of speech proper. Such devices, or "conceits," as the old writers would say, invariably disappear from musical instruments and orchestras as sounds grow more and more out of noise through the discipline of Art into music.

214. SYMPATHETIC WIRES.

But to return to our violin. What was to determine the shape and size of basses, viols, and violins? The question was fully illustrated in the loan exhibition of which I am speaking. For some time it seemed as if nothing but the caprice of amateurs and lute-makers was to be consulted. All attempts to classify

215. THE QUARTETT.

the number and shapes of the viol tribe, up to at least 1600, must fail. Some idea of the infinite variety of these instruments—a variety which continued long after the modern quartett of instruments (two violins, tenor, and violoncello) had been established—may be gathered by the slight sketches of outlines which I have culled in the South Kensington Museum. But as music acquired form, science, and precision, musical instruments followed suit. It is not too much to affirm that the madrigal created the modern string quartett. The singing schools soon divided the voice into the usual four divisions. The madrigals of the Elizabethan Age brought these four divisions into the most sharply defined perfection. At first the crowd of viols stood like humble lackeys in the ante-chambers of the vocal art, and were only called in to assist the singers, the player standing over the singer and playing the notes in unison with him. It was soon found that each voice ought to have its appropriate viol—the treble voice a treble viol, or what we should call a violin; the tenor and counter-tenor would be accompanied by a violin or viola, or two violas of different sizes; and the bass would be helped through by one of those Viols di Gamba—the violoncello of the period of which the South Kensington Museum can boast some splendid specimens. Here, then, we have the elements at least of the modern quartett, but in a sadly servile condition. But now and then it would happen that a voice was absent, and then the voice, instead


VIOLONCELLO
VIOLS DI GAMBA
1700
1640
17TH C.
17TH C.
1686
1650
VIOLA
OLD VIOLAS OF 17TH CENTURY
VIOLIN
OLD VIOLINS OF 17TH CENTURY.
1620.
1640
1660
1680.
1700.
1740
1770
1790.
ECCENTRICS & KITS

of being attended by, would be *replaced* by, an instrument. At last it appeared that the four instruments could play the madrigal by themselves without the voices, and this was not uncommonly done, as early as Elizabeth's time. We have *Madrigals of five and six parts apart for Violas and Voices,* by THOMAS WEELKES; DOWLAND, the celebrated lutenist, published, in 1600, *Songs or Ayres with Tablature for the Lute Orpherion, with the Viol di Gamba.* In 1605 instrumental music had already become very independent, for TOBIAS HUME published *Musical Concertes for two base viols, expressing five parts, with pleasant reports one from the other, and for two Theorbo viols, and also for the Theorbo viole, with two treble viola, or two with one treble,* all which shows that the viol tribe could by this time walk very well alone, and, what is more important, that the treble viol was steadily advancing in public favour.

TESTATOR, called IL VECCHIO, of Milan, about 1590, is said by some to have been the first maker of the violin, but

216. THE "LITTLE VIOLIN" BECOMES POPULAR.

DUIFFOPRUGCAR (beware of VUILLAUME's copies!) made undoubted violins at the beginning of that century. The new instrument first got into the French bands, and then cautiously crossed the Channel and began to bid for public favour as the fiddle, or the little violin, in England. It was greeted with the greatest contempt. Why, forsooth, was the peaceable rumbling of the old viols to be screamed down by this impudent

and airy little impostor? The author of *Musick's Monument* raises almost the last scream against the king of instruments; it was to be found everywhere, and he could not bear to see the big Theorbo lutes and lumpy viols "overtoped (in His Majesty's band—CHARLES II.) by squaling, scoulding fiddlers." As for their music, he calls it merely "high-prized noise." But the old masters had hit upon a model which was not to be put down in a hurry when they drew the outline of the first violins. When old viols first came to be cut down, the proportions were naturally found to be all wrong for an instrument of a smaller size; no doubt the great bulginess of the early violins by GASPARD, DUIFFOPRUGCAR, 1515, and even those of GASPAR DI SALO (1560–1610), where the contour is wonderfully in advance of the age, but where the rise of the belly is carried right up pumpkin-wise to the sides, results from the model suggested by simply cutting down the bulging old tenors. Yet, even in this form the superior handiness and sprightliness of the violin shape and tone soon commended itself to the players and the public alike. The following little verse gives a correct account of the matter:—

> In former days we had the *Viol* in,
> Ere the true instrument had come about;
> But now we say since this all ears doth win,
> The Violin hath put the *Viol out*.

CHARLES II., probably in imitation of a far greater potentate and contemporary, with whom his relations are only

too well known through LORD MACAULAY'S history, LOUIS XIV., had twenty-four fiddlers (*Les petits violons du Roi*) to play to him during his meals. The French king indulged himself in the same festive manner. And it is doubtless from the Restoration (1660) that the violin began to put the viol out, and take its place along with its brethren the tenor, violoncello, and contrebasse, until cabinet music blossomed into the modern quartett form in which it has long since reigned without a rival.

217. RARE OLD SPECIMENS.

A few great names connected with the progress and perfection of the violin must be noted. As early as 1449, JOAN KERLINO, or CARLINO, founded a great Lute School at Brescia. There was a finely-formed viol reputed to be his in the South Kensington Loan Collection, No. 114, about 1452: its perfect finish and preservation make it almost unique. VENTURI LINELLI, or Linaro, made viols at Venice in 1520, but the specimen, No. 134, in the South Kensington, dated 1563, was without grace or any fine sense of proportion—we should say far inferior to the earlier BRESCIAN CARLINO in everything except wonderful preservation; but then it is a hundred years later, and ought to have been better in every respect. Although it is believed that TESTATOR, of Milan, first made what he named a violin, yet BRESCIA was undoubtedly the first great school of lutists and violin-makers, and GASPAR DI SALO, of Brescia (1560–1610), was

the first man who really conceived of the violin as an instrument worthy of a distinct individuality, and not merely a bulgy viol cut down. In this maker the pumpkin-bellies of DUIFFOPRUGCAR (1515) have considerably diminished; the instrument has been somewhat drawn out in length, a well-defined scoop appears on either side of the *f f*'s, the middle is still high and barrel-like, the varnish is fine, thick, and brown—no tinge of the mellow red and orange colours so lovely in the later Cremonese makers. The tone of GASPAR's first and second strings is lively, bright, and piercing, "a dry golden sound," as DR. FOSTER calls it; the third string weak, but sweetly soft; the fourth round and very fine. Compared with the later prodigies of Cremona, the workmanship lacks finish and delicacy, but the cutting is bold and original, the wood is strong, and the *f f* holes are straight and parallel—one of the distinctive marks of the Brescian school—the purfling, or inlaid border that marks the inner edge of all violins, is finely placed and *double*, another distinctive mark of the same school.

JEAN PAUL MAGGINI (1590–1640), (not SANTO MAGGINI of the 18th century), probably a pupil of GASPAR DI SALO's did all that could be done with his master's model, but the sceptre had in reality passed to Cremona, when ANDREAS AMATI (1530?–1580?) began to make violins. His violins are small, his tone sweet but not powerful. His sons, ANTONY and JEROME, who made violins together, excelled

him; and his grandson, NICOLAS AMATI, brought his father's model to still greater perfection. He is considered the great man of the family. Of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS and of STRADIVARIUS, it is not our purpose to speak at any length here. The first, whose violins are distinguished for power above all the AMATIS, but who does not equal the great STRADIVARIUS in perfection of model and finish, and equality of tone, probably stands next to him in the estimation of most violinists. They often say "If we cannot get a Stradivarius, give us a Joseph Guarnerius."

THE STORY OF JACOBUS STAINER.

218. There is one other maker who, at one time, enjoyed in England at least a reputation almost equal to the Cremonese makers, and that is JACOB STAINER. In 1644, having come from the Tyrol, he worked under the AMATIS at Cremona. One of them — NICOLAS or ANTHONY, I cannot quite make out which — offered him a daugher in marriage, which he appears to have declined. He had, for reasons it is needless here to specify, already committed himself to MARGARETHA HOLZHAMMER, whom he married on his return to Absom. She was a peasant girl, and made him an uncongenial wife. Before his marriage he made some of his finest violins; his work is equal in finish to the best Amatis—the belly is modelled higher than the back, the edges are strong and round, the purfling is nearer to the edges than in the Amatis, and very narrow, the *f f* are beautifully cut and

shorter, the upper and under turns being perfectly round, the neck and scroll very regular and smooth. These early instruments are rarely to be found; the genuine labels are *written;* in the Tyrolese forgeries they are often printed.

As his family increased his work began to suffer; he grew slovenly and rapid, and the violins of this middle period are very inferior. Before long, however, his merits were recognised; his violins sold well, and this seems to have put him once more upon his metal; for he again began to work with great care, and made splendid fiddles. At the close of his working life he made sixteen splendid violins, twelve of which he sent as trophies of his genius to the twelve Electors, and the remaining four to the Emperor. These are known as Stainer-Electors. But the end was near, for, either through love or loss of money, he went mad and died soon afterwards. STAINER's tone is pure and silvery, and has a certain piercing quality: it has not the roundness of GUARNERIUS, nor the sweetness of the Amati, nor the even breadth and power of the Stradivarius, but its quality is peculiar and, in the finest specimens, full of charm and character.

219. A FEW NAMES.

BERGONZI, GUADAGNINI, SERAPHINO, ALBANI, are all names of frequent occurrence in the violin trade, and are fetching increasingly large prices; whilst KLOTZ, STAINER's clever foreman, whose violins are constantly mistaken for those of his master, though

different, the belly being slightly depressed, deserves special notice, and of all his pupils stands first. England can boast of some good makers. RICHARD DUKE'S violins were all the rage last century in this country before the merits of the Cremonas were thoroughly understood. Probably STAINER and DUKE, whose instruments are somewhat on the same model, were the most acceptable and popular violin-makers for the English market until towards the end of the last century, when the Cremonas began to find their way over here, alas! in too great numbers, for most of them were spurious, and swamped everything else. BENJAMIN BANKS, who was born and died in the last century, is by many considered to be the finest of the English makers. His violoncellos are much sought after still. WILLIAM FORSTER, who flourished in the middle of the last century, was one, the greatest, of a family of highly esteemed makers; and BERNHARDT FENDT, who settled in this country, and died only in 1832, was a clever maker, whose imitations of old violins were good enough to take in the judges at the South Kensington, in 1872, as I shall presently show.

CHARACTER OF CREMONA WORK.

220. It is in the presence of a fine historical collection like that of 1872, that I am moved to point out, as I go from case to case, in what consisted the changes which transformed the tubby, old feeble-toned viols into the brilliant, graceful Cremonese model,

with its almost living curves, and its clear sweet notes. The progression has been from the large round viol model, the hump-back and the pot-belly, to the small flat model, with gentle arc in back and belly, softened away with curves of delicious grace and smoothness to the edges of the purfling. The four corners of the side curves have also become full of distinctive character; they are no longer stumpy in outline as though they had difficulty in getting away from the thick bulge of the sides, but they are carried down in the Amatis with a clean and gentle sweep. The Stradivarius corners are still more full of character: they do not hang down so much as the Amatis, they are cut out with great purity and almost lifted up with a kind of balanced elasticity. No one ever laid in purfling like STRADIVARIUS. The purfling consists of three thread-like pieces of wood, two of ebony, the centre one of sycamore, inlaid near the edge and following the lines of the violin in the back and belly. It is of no use beyond giving finish to what is really an exquisite work of Art. Every part of a Stradivarius violin is an unhurried labour of love, and the purfling is full of significance; not only does it test the fine and delicate handling of the workman, but it calls attention to the outlines of his instrument—outlines which are drawn with all the balanced freedom and grace of a Greek frieze. But the royal purfling of STRADIVARIUS bears his sign-manual especially in the treatment of the angles, in the slender string-like points into which it runs—it

seems to shoot suddenly into the corners with a peculiar bend. Up to this point it has rigidly followed the outline of the instrument; but on entering the corners it forms a graceful twist of its own, like a wasp's sting, calling special attention, as it were, to the delicately-finished angles, and making a curve in harmonious contrast with them. This subtle thought is peculiar to STRADIVARIUS and his close copyists, and serves to illustrate the grand and original freedom of his outlines. The two *ff*'s, or sound-holes, are drawn with the same originality, and with a certain severe grace and temperate beauty. Let the eye run over the grotesque wriggling holes of the old Viols di Gamba, the vulgar slits, the senseless punctures, the crude experiments of every possible description as illustrated in my plate; let us glance at the straight, stiff Maggini *ff*'s, and then glance back at the perfect wave of the *f* in the Stradivarius violin, cut as with the chisel of a great artist at a single sitting, with an ardour and love of its beauty, and its bend that, after 180 years, is as infectious as ever, making the delight of connoisseurs and the despair of forgers and all other copyists. But nowhere is the master more distinctive than in the fluting of his scroll, and the set and modelling of his heads. Perhaps it never occurred to our readers that there was much difference between one fiddle-head and another; yet a Stradivarius is known from a Stainer, for instance, by his head, as surely as you can tell a Greek from a Jewish face. Take up your Stradi-

varius, hold it straight out against the light with its belly towards you, and note the commanding outline of the head, full front. The two sides of the scroll seem to be almost in motion, like curling wood thrown off by a revolving centrebit or a plane in action. The two points seem a little lifted up with incomparable energy and strength, and lightly balanced with each other. The dip of the head, relieved by the fine fluting, is powerful but not heavy; and in the finest Stradivarius and Joseph Guarnerius patterns, reminds one of a lion's face in repose, only the Stradivarius is invariably more graceful and beautiful in its majesty where the Guarnerius is strong, with a sort of rough and massive grandeur. But turn from either of these full-fronted heads to lesser magnates, and what a falling off is there—some are what we may call pot-bellied heads; others brutal, snub, bull-dog heads; others lean and poor; others simply coarse and stupid; others cut mechanically without character, or top-heavy, poor and thin-flanked near the neck; others without any sense of proportion, the two sides of the scroll uneven, one dipping down lop-eared, and the other turning up like a *nez retroussé*, and so on, until the eye comes back and rests upon the perfect and dignified charms of the Stradivarius head. It will bear inspection—look at it sideways, mark the throw of the scroll; was there any carving of Gibbons or the Belgians, any trailing vine-stem, any circling ivy cut in rich oak, more finely felt in its sensitive edges, its harmonious sweep, its

delicate tendril-curves, than the Stradivarius maple-scroll, with its smooth flesh-like flutings, its soft clean edge and circular bends which, like the convolvulus or jessamine coil, is never any part of a true circle? And then look at the varnish lying like a sheet of thin jasper on the back and belly, at once shielding these from decay, whilst revealing century after century the transparent filaments of the mottled maple or sycamore, and the symmetrical deal crossed between the fibres with millions of tiny rays which show where lie the dessicated cells now hollow and fit for perfect resonance through which the sap once flowed. The rich, almost orange-coloured, varnish, is as good as a magnifying glass: through it we can at this day judge of the loving selection made of the choicest timber, and the infinite care bestowed upon its preparation, the tempering as well as the carving of it.

221. LOST CONDITIONS.

We seek in vain for the conditions under which the great violins were produced. Even if we had the love, the patience, and the inspiration for the work, the work itself would never pay—it would never fetch the price of the labour and time bestowed upon it. The instrument itself, simple as it looks, is to be composed of no less than seventy-one pieces. Sycamore or maple must be got for the back, sides, neck, and circle. Soft deal for the belly, bass bar, sound post, and six internal blocks; ebony for the finger-board and tail-piece; white

and ebony for the purfling. The wood must be cut only in December and January, and only that part must be used which has been exposed to the sun. You may cut up planks and planks before you find a piece suitable for a really fine back or belly. Witness the grain of a Stradivarius or Amati violin; mark the almost pictorially beautiful health and evenness of its wavy lines, free from all knots, irregularity of growth, studded with symmetrical and billowy veins, where the rich sap once flowed. And when the wood is cut it must be tempered and dried, not with artificial warmth, but with the slow and penetrating influence of a dry, warm Cremona climate. For no customer, for no market, can the process be hurried. And the application of the varnish required corresponding care. It was to be perfectly wedded to the rare wood—a companionship destined to last for ages—to outlast so many generations of men and women, was not to be enterprised or undertaken lightly. In the spring, when the air got clear and bright and the storms were past, the subtle gums and oils were mixed slowly and deliberately: hours to stand, hours to settle, hours for perfect fusing and amalgamation of parts; clear white light gleaming from roads strewn with the dazzling marble dust of Lombardy; clear blue sky, warm dry air, and the skill of an alchemist, these were the conditions for mixing the incomparable Cremona varnish. So deliberately was it prepared and laid on, just when the wood was fit to receive it—laid on in three coats in such a manner as

to sink into the dessicated pores, and become a part of the wood, as the aromatic herbs and juices become a part of the flesh that is embalmed for a thousand years. All through the summer did that matchless varnish, which some say contained ground amber, and which at any rate was charged with subtle secrets, sink and soak into the sycamore and deal plates, until now, when age has rubbed away its clear and agate crust in many places, the violin is found no longer to need that protection, for the wood itself seems to have become petrified into clear agate, and is capable throughout its myriad pores and fibres of resisting the worm, and even damp and the other ravaging influences of ordinary decay.

The old varnishes have been closely imitated by M. VUILLAUME, and other clever makers, but a good judge can tell the genuine from the false. It has often been maintained that the dryness of the wood gave the fine quality of tone desired; and the French makers have accordingly baked the wood of their new violins; but although the tone has been thus to some extent permaturely mellowed, there is every reason to fear that the baked fiddles, like some old fiddles made of too slight wood and cut too thin, have a tendency to get "played out"; that is, after attaining tone they lose tone. Age, no doubt, improves wood, and the constant vibration of playing tends, it is said, to shake into hollows the pores of the wood, and expel the particles of dried sap

222. GOOD AND BAD FIDDLES.

in dust. But the grand secret after all lay in the manufacture of the original instrument, in the shape, in the preparation of the wood before the parts were fixed together, in the varnish and general adjustments of the interior. The violin, as it comes from the hands of the great makers, as I shall presently illustrate, was always fine. Age and playing cannot make a good fiddle out of a bad one, although age and playing doubtless improves good fiddles. There are hosts of instruments a hundred years old which are, and always will be, bad to the last degree.

223. THE MYSTIC RULE OF THUMB.

Much has been said about the capricious shape of the violin. Some professors have maintained that two flat boards for back and belly would be better than any curve. I answer that every degree of flatness has been tried. In the case of the guitar it has been adopted, but the present form of a slightly curved belly and back—the Stradivarius pattern, I must reiterate—is the result of centuries of experiment, and it has held its own, and seems likely to do so, against the most modern and scientific patterns, of which there have been many. The fact is, that in the perfection of each technical trade there is something which escapes analysis. The last handful of refined tin or Drontheim copper thrown in apparently without any apparent method, but with the infallible method of instinct at a particular moment when the seething mass of molten metal reaches a cer-

tain temperature, or presents a certain appearance—*that* is indispensable to the rich true tone of the bell. Yet the proportions were fixed before. Yes! but that handful, under the circumstances, was yet needful. So with the violin: a certain curve, a block inside placed instinctively a hundredth of an inch one way or the other, a slight hollow, a gentle rise, things which can hardly be weighed and measured, because, with each separate specimen on the same model, there are differences—whoever saw two Stradivarius violins alike?—and differences, however small, change the subtle relations of different parts. These are things which baffle rule and measurement, and make it impossible to produce Stradivarius tone to order. Nor have more ambitious attempts to change those measurements succeeded better, even when Stradivarius measurements have been rightly adopted. Some of us may have heard of a late experiment in France, where a scientific violin and a Stradivarius were played out of sight to a select body of judges, and the judges were fairly puzzled to tell which was which; hence it was inferred that there was no difference. As well tell a man who has been tasting port and sherry alternately several times with his eyes shut that there is no difference between these wines because his sense of taste is not proof against a certain test invented to confuse him. The ear is as delicate and as easily perturbed as the palate.

But the real answer to such modern rivals of STRADI-

VARIUS is that no one will play upon them who can get the genuine article. The extreme difficulty of getting a really fine old violin would in itself create a demand for any cheap instrument which could yield even a fair equivalent in quality. But as regards quality, the secret is one affecting the player quite as much as the listener. A good player can bring a good sound out of almost anything, but *he* feels the difference. A good whip can drive almost any horse somehow and get along. But there are endearing qualities in the rare old violins that cannot be described. They answer to your lightest touch; they can be ridden without saddle, and driven without bit or bridle; they seem to vibrate in advance, and anticipate your most delicate shades of emotion. The coarse fiddles you never can get to understand you, the medium is too gross; you can thrash the sound out of them, and others who know not what you *want* to get or to experience are well satisfied; but *you* are not.

224. DEAR TO THE PLAYER!

You find in the Cremona an echo of the human soul itself. When BALZAC tells us of a man who had imprisoned the soul of his mother in a violin, he was nearer a certain truth than some of his readers fancy. The soul that is imprisoned in your violin is not your mother's, it is your own soul, seeking and finding through the most sensitive of all musical instruments an utterance such as the human voice alone can

225. THE SOUL OF A CREMONA.

equal, but not excel. Indeed, it seems that the more genius, the more time, the more love, the more absorption, the more experience have gone to the making of a violin, the more it has become assimilated to the soul of a man. We are evermore taking out of these noble old violins, the great inexhaustible souls that STRADIVARIUS and the AMATIS spent their lives in pouring into them. The violin is like the earth itself, you can only get out of it so much of agricultural wealth as has been put into it.

And now we may well shudder at the dreadful things which have been done in the direction of systematic forgeries of all kinds. Germany is to blame for a vast number of coarse and impudent fiddles labelled with and libelling the names of GUARNERIUS, the AMATIS, and even STRADIVARIUS, and worth from one pound to thirty shillings a-piece. But the most dangerous of all forgeries are the French forgeries at the close of last century by the firm of LUPOT, and the more modern ones by VUILLAUME—on the whole the best maker of the present century. These violins are calculated to deceive all but the best judges. The most shameful of all practices is one of which our own countrymen cannot altogether be acquitted. A fine violin has often been taken to pieces and two or even three others made out of its parts. The genuine back, or head, or belly, or even sides being relied on to do duty for the spuriousness

226. FORGERIES.

of the rest, and the whole violin has often passed as a genuine instrument and fetched a high price. This infamous device has led to the destruction of many a really grand old violin. It is a bitter and heartless mockery to see some noble head and neck on a vile belly, or to find a royal GUARNERIUS back mated to a wretched modern French or English set of ribs and belly. Yet the demand for Cremonas has become of late so extensive that we tremble to think what the fate of the few remaining complete violins may be when once they come, as come they must, from time to time, into the open market.

227. VIOLIN BOWS.

And now a word about violin bows. It is, no doubt, possible to play upon a violin with a tobacco-pipe, or almost anything that sets the strings in vibration, but a good well-balanced bow is the indispensable magic wand required before the magician can produce his more subtle and amazing effects. Up to the middle of the seventeenth century, in 1650, the violin bow was short and clumsy, something like our double bass bows, only without any clasp to keep the horse-hair flat, or screw to pull it tight. CORELLI, in the seventeenth century, played with an awkward bow, much curved, with hardly any elasticity, and ill adapted to produce those finely gradated effects in which violinists now delight. The only idea of expression these old masters seem to have had, was that of playing a passage first loud and then soft. TARTINI (1730), whose

romantic genius chafed against the old stiff style, much improved the bow, making it thinner, longer, more elastic, and, above all, giving it the curve backwards instead of forwards, a peculiarity which violin bows have since retained. It was not, however, until the middle of the eighteenth century, that TOURTE, at Paris, devoted himself to the final improvement of the bow. He is said to have introduced the button and screw, to have abolished the useless prolongation of the point, and given the violin bow that length and sweep which was afterwards brought to such perfection, and which enabled PAGANINI and his followers to effect a revolution in the art of violin playing. My plate will give at a glance the principal improvements in the violin bow.

It is doubtful whether any bow-maker has surpassed our own EDWARD DODD, who, like so many of the great violin-makers, was very long-lived, and died in 1810 in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, aged, it is said, 105 years. The usual length of a modern violin bow is about twenty-nine inches from top to toe.

228. ABOUT FIDDLERS.

In noticing the progress of the violin, it is not possible entirely to separate its history from that of some who have played upon it. Players and instruments have acted and re-acted upon one another in a remarkable way. Nor does the violin owe a trifling debt to amateurs. They have brought it into notice; they have kept it there; they have paid the makers; they have

encouraged the professionals. From the earliest times, the viol tribe has had a strange fascination for amateurs, and a very curious list might be made out of its unprofessional votaries. STEPHENS, in his *Essays and Characters*, 1615, observes that a fiddler is, when he plays well, a delight only to those who have their hearing; but is, when he plays ill, a delight only for those who have not their hearing. But we demur to this last statement: for the fiddler is always a delight unto himself. The bad player from the first is never deterred from his absorbing pursuit by the horrible sounds which he produces. He may tire of the flute, cornet, or piano; but the variety of screams and scratches that can be got out of rosined horse-hair rubbed upon catgut, at once establishes the violin supreme in variety and attraction. SALOMAN once said to GEORGE III., whilst instructing that monarch in the subtle art, "Fiddlers may be divided into three classes. To the first belong those who cannot play at all; to the second, those who play badly; and to the third, those who play well. You, sire, have already reached the second"; which reminds one of HAYDN'S reply to another royal personage who was anxious to know what the composer thought of his performance, "Vy, sir, your Highness plays like a Prince!"

But fiddlers did not all at once become the companions of princes. Their music used to be called simply "noyse." Mulligrub, in the *Dutch Courtesan*, says, "Oh, wife! oh, wife! oh, Jack! how does thy mother? Is there any

fiddlers in the house?" Mrs. Mulligrub replies, "Yes; Mr. Creakes's noyse."

Yet though from the earliest times up to the great Cremona period, the small viol was associated almost exclusively with routs, pot-houses, or at best dancing-parties, the clergy may claim the merit of having been true to it from the first.

229. THE CLERGY AS FIDDLERS.

The clergyman of EDWARD II.'s time, when he went out into society took, in addition to his kerchief and his comb, his "rowbyble," otherwise called rebella or viella. The old viols were much used in churches, and although it was some time before the new-fangled violin was admitted into the sanctuary, yet the Brescian and Cremonese models soon forced an entrance; and I have in my possession a genuine GUARNERIUS which has unfortunately been cut down in the ribs, and still retains the mark where a hook has been fastened into the back to fasten the chain which went round the player's neck, and supported the violin whenever he had occasion in processions to drop suddenly on his knees at the elevation of the Host. OURY pointed out to me the little round hole in the back, since carefully plugged. BOURDALOUE, the celebrated French preacher, found the violin indispensable to the composition of some of his sermons. He used to say that he often got too depressed to treat his subjects with the necessary vigour and variety. He would then

resort to exercise and to a good stiff practice on his violin, and would find himself completely restored by the process. I am told that Dr. Newman (now Cardinal) is an excellent violinist. After this we may think the poet Cowper a little hard on another reverend fiddler—the excellent Charles Wesley, who, at the close of some laborious day, would often resort to his violin.

> With wire and catgut he concludes the day,

is a sharp line which the kind-hearted poet is said to have regretted in his later years.

A more graceful comment was called forth from Dean Swift, when in his presence a lady's mantle or *mantua* caught fire and injured a gentleman's violin that happened to be lying near it:

> "*Mantua*, væ! miseræ nimiùm vicina *Cremonæ*!"

The rise of the violin in England was greatly indebted to royal patronage. Queen Elizabeth was not only in the habit of dancing to it, but presented a quaint but splendidly carved specimen of the instrument to the Earl of Leicester, preserved in the South Kensington Museum, in the loan collection, numbered 125. In 1613, ten of the king's violinists received one pound a-piece for performing at the Court masque. Charles Gueroult and Thomas Giles, at different times

230. KINGS AND FIDDLERS.

instructors of music to PRINCE HENRY afterwards HENRY VI., had annuities of one hundred marks each. CHARLES I. was a great patron of music, and took lessons from MR. COPERARIO, a fine player on the Viol di Gamba. In the accounts of JAMES I., we find a charge of forty pounds for a set of viols for the king. This king did himself the honour to incorporate the musicians of London, when they had for arms, "Azure, a swan argent within a tressure counter-flure; or, in a chief, gules, a rose between lions; or, for crest, the celestial sign Lyra." And CHARLES I., in his eleventh year, granted a charter to NICHOLAS LANIERE and others, styling them "Marshell Wardens and Cominalty, of the Arts and Science of Musick in Westminster, in the county of Middlesex." But CHARLES II. did most for the violin by giving it the preference over all the old viols in his private band. PEPYS, in his Diary, lets us perceive the pride and solace he took in his violin. "21st November, 1660. At night to my viallin. The first time I have played on it since come to this house, in my dining-roome, and afterwards to my lute there; and I took much pleasure to have the neighbours come forth in the yard to hear me. December 3rd. Rose by candle, and spent my morning in fiddling, till time to go to the office. 12th April, 1669. Home —and after sitting awhile thrumming upon my viol and singing, I to bed, and left my wife to do something to a waistcoat and petticoat she is to wear to-morrow."

It is hardly necessary to observe that the Church and the aristocracy now vied with each other in promoting the interest of music, and especially in their *grandes passions* for the violin. Amongst the exhibitors at the South Kensington I find the names of several clergy, and the Dukes of EDINBURGH and of LEINSTER, with many other illustrious noblemen, who have not been slow in bringing together several splendid instruments for exhibition, some of which I shall have occasion to allude to presently.

231. LADIES AS VIOLINISTS.

A great deal has lately been said about the propriety of ladies playing the violin. Some people seem to think it quite a novelty, but the practice in England at least is old enough. On the painted roof of Peterborough Cathedral, said to be not later than 1194, is depicted a female figure seated and holding on her lap a sort of viol with four strings and four sound-holes: her left hand grasps the head, whilst she draws a bow across the strings with her right. Amongst the royal accounts, November 2, 1495, we read, "To a woman who singeth with a fidell, 2s.; the queen's male 'fideler' of the period, Feb. 17, 1497, was paid 'in rewarde,' £1 6s. 8d."

Poor ANNE OF CLEVES, after her divorce from HENRY VIII., amused herself sometimes by playing on a sort of viol with six strings and frets, but no distinct finger-board. From a ballad in CHARLES I.'s reign, I find that the art of viol playing was not uncommon amongst

ladies ; and amongst the accomplishments of a lady, we read that—

> She sings and she plays
> And she knows all the keys
> Of the viol de Gamba and lute.

In more modern times ladies have excelled on the violin. MOZART wrote a sonata for REGINA SCHLICK, born at Mantua, 1764. LOUISE GAUTHEROT, a Frenchwoman, was also distinguished for her concertos played at the London Oratorio Concerts, 1789-90. LUIGA GERBINI, a pupil of the celebrated VIOTTI, played solos at Lisbon in 1799, and afterwards visited London in 1801. SIGNORA PARAVICINI, another of VIOTTI's pupils, was a favourite of JOSEPHINE, the wife of BUONAPARTE. She afterwards grew so poor as to be obliged to part with most of her wardrobe, but was charitably helped by some generous Italians at Milan. In 1827 she was much admired, and in the words of a poet—

> Flourished her bow and showed how fame was won.

She played at Bologna as late as 1832. The names of MESDAMES KRAHMEN, SCHULTZ, ELEONORA NEUMANN, and FILIPOWICZ, will be familiar to some of our readers, whilst few living musicians will need to be reminded of MDLLE. SOPHIE HUMLER and MADAME NORMAN-NERUDA.

It was, I believe, once maintained that the arm of a *beau* was more fit for a lady than a *bow* arm ; but that prejudice has now happily vanished. Indeed nothing can

be more appropriate in a lady's hands than a violin properly held and properly played. If she have a good arm it is shown to the best advantage; if she have a pretty hand and tapering fingers, and a slender wrist, all these are thrown into the most graceful positions by the action of bowing and fingering.

Her arms, shoulders, and hands, her head and neck, and indeed her whole body, have but to follow sympathetically the undulating and delicate curves of the violin itself. A beautiful woman holding a beautiful violin is one of the most beautiful sights in the world. There are refinements of sentiment and of execution, which a woman's sensitive hand is peculiarly fitted to render; in delicacy of touch and finely gradated effects she is unsurpassed, and although usually deficient in roundness of tone, yet both in rapidity of execution and in fine feeling, have we not lately seen in the case of MADAME NORMAN-NERUDA *quid fœmina possit*!

Some of our readers may be interested to know the names of the favourite violins used by several illustrious musicians.

VIOLINISTS AND THEIR VIOLINS.

232. MOZART, MM. ALARD and SIVORI, all possessed fine STAINER violins. PAGANINI's favourite instrument, now at Genoa, was a JOSEPH GUARNERIUS. DRAGONETTI's double-basses, chiefly by GASPAR DI SALO, were duly displayed at the South Kensington Loan Exhibition. SIGNOR BOTTESINI produces his marvellous effects and

musical gymnastics upon a small CARLO TESTORE contrebasso. This Milanese maker dates his instruments 16—, the last two figures being always written in MS., a common practice with the old makers, who sometimes even wrote the whole label *propriâ manu*. The forgeries, on the other hand, have often the whole label printed. LINDLEY, the great violoncello player, seems to have been strangely partial to English makers. He made his *début* on a THOMAS SMITH, whose instruments average from five to eight pounds; and for nearly forty years he played at the Italian Opera on a WILLIAM FORSTER, which he surnamed "The Eclipse." SIGNOR PIATTI owns a splendid STAINER tenor, lately exhibited in the South Kensington Museum. DE BERIOT, oddly enough, chose, for many years, to play on a MARIANI, of Brescia, (1570–1620), by no means one of the first makers; indeed, he lived before the splendid Cremonese period, and followed the models of MAGGINI. OLE BULL possessed a remarkably fine MAGGINI, with Caryatides, said to be by BENVENUTO CELLINI. In 1861, M. VIEUXTEMPS used a LORENZO STORIONI (about 1782). This maker was the last of the old Cremonese school. He made on the model of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and his tone was much admired. M. JOACHIM, I believe, plays habitually on a fine STRADIVARIUS. PROFESSOR ELLA informs me that MOLIQUE, PIATTI, AUER, and others have made their *début* upon inferior instruments, and only acquired their full reputation when later they became possessed of fine violins. Many aspirants to fame have had to thank the Professor for

the loan of his GUARNERIUS and STRADIVARIUS at the Musical Union Concerts. But it must be remembered that most violinists have several instruments with different qualities, suitable for different occasions, and, like other men, they are liable to part with their instruments and acquire others.

A CRITICISM ON THE LOAN COLLECTION.

233. I will now ask the reader to look with me a little more closely at that Loan Collection of 1872 in the South Kensington Museum, which I have from time to time referred to in the course of this protracted meditation. That exhibition, though now closed, has an interest and significance for all lovers of violins far beyond the limits of a few show-months. The instruments are most of them more or less historical. Each is known to a large circle of admirers; some have a world-wide reputation, whilst a few have been puffed into notice and clearly over-rated. Under these circumstances, in the interests of Art, I shall not hesitate to place on record some judgments upon them which, I trust, may have more than an ephemeral value.

Let us once more approach these fascinating glass-cases, determined to see all that can be seen, and lay it to heart. At first the eager student will probably be disappointed. They all look to him so much alike; is there really the difference between £20 and £600 in the instruments before him? I remember that my first visit to the Italian

picture-galleries filled me with the same feeling of puzzled disappointment. The pictures I liked were seldom the best; all the browns were much alike, and one old master seemed little different from another; above all, a fine copy looked quite as good as, or rather better than, the original. It is only after looking, and looking for months, for years, that the old painters reveal themselves; and it is only by examining and brooding over violins that the characteristics of each master slowly come out beyond a shadow of a doubt, until we may be said to know a good fiddle when we see it.

Let us examine first, one case containing three violins, lent by M. VUILLAUME, which is in some respects more interesting than all the rest put together. It

234. THE MESSIE.

contains the unique "Messie," STRADIVARIUS (91); its history is romantic. It was finished in 1716, and until a few years ago had never been played on at all. It was bought in 1760 by the COUNT COZIO DE SALABUE, who never played it, but kept it spotless, like some rare jewel, till his death. His heirs sold it to LUIGI TARISIO, who kept it jealously without allowing anyone even to see it. At his death, in 1854, it was hidden away in the "Ferme de la Croix," near the little village of Fontanelle, Navarre. There M. VUILLAUME rediscovered it in January 1855, and upon breaking its silence for the first time discovered that it possessed all the finest qualities

of the finest STRADIVARIUS violins, although it had never been played upon until then.

We stand reverently before it—fresh from the great master's hand, as though finished yesterday—it is for the first time unveiled in all its intact glory to the gaze of thousands to whom for years it has been a kind of myth. It is as though the ivory Minerva of PHIDIAS that stood once in the Parthenon, should be discovered hidden away with the utmost care in some deep, dry, and hermetically sealed sepulchre of the East, and brought over scathless to be set up amidst the Elgin fragments, the only perfect relic of them all. So stands this matchless new violin amidst its time-worn, rubbed, and fractured brethren.

It is of the grand pattern, and yet, as in Milan Cathedral, beauty rather than power is its distinguishing characteristic; it is massive without looking massive; its strength is hidden beneath its grace. The back is in two parts, the wood very choice. The fine graining of the flat belly is remarkable. The holes are delicately cut, the left *f* a shade lower than the right—a practice so common that it must have been intentional with STRADIVARIUS—his fine eye not tolerating even there the suspicion of mechanical work. We see in this violin alone what the perfect STRADIVARIUS corners were; in every other known specimen the varnish and the wood are both rubbed. In the "Messiah" they are untouched and clean-looking, wondrously sharp and wide-awake, yet without vulgarity, and of a perfect finish.

The ease and neatness of the purfling, which has, of course, never been repaired, is incomparable, and over the whole instrument lies a thick, rich, red-brown varnish, wondrous to behold; the washing of it is level and lavish, and unworn by time or use. The brush seems to have left it about a week—it is hanging up in the warm workshop at Cremona, and has just dried with all the glitter fresh upon it. The neck has been skilfully lengthened by M. VUILLAUME; but in order to avoid touching the fabric he has inserted a piece of wood flat between the heel and the rib instead of cutting into the internal block: the usual method adopted in lengthening the old fiddle necks for modern use.

The head is light and graceful rather than heavy or powerful, the scroll thrown off like a ribbon lightly curled around the finger and drawn in; one side of the scroll is slightly lower than the other, the fluting smooth, with a surface like that of clear and still water, and the lines of the scroll are picked out with a thick rim of brown paint or varnish that serves to accentuate the outlines of the head just as purfling calls attention to the contour of the back and belly. In every other violin this black head-rim has been almost entirely effaced, but in the "Messiah" it remains to show us the maker's intention. He meant you to take up his violin and to see at a glance its whole outline, traced and emphasized by a sharp purfling carried out in the head by a deep rim of black varnish. This brooding over the beauty of curves, this anxiety that they should be manifest to all

men, is most instructive and touching; neither the purfling nor the black paint added to the tone, or even the preservation of the instrument, it was the art instinct of the old makers piercing the manufacture.

235. THE PUCELLE.

By the side of the "Messie" hangs the "Pucelle" violin of STRADIVARIUS. It, also, has a history. It bears a label 1709; it has been very little played on; it came to Paris in 1840; it passed into the hands of M. LEROY, banquier, and at his death went to his heir, M. GLANDAZ. It is of the grand pattern; purfling repaired under the left or chin side; the *f*'s boldly cut and coarser than in the "Messiah," and it seems to lack the absolute sense of proportion between the top and bottom, which gives to the "Messiah" its regal breadth and freedom of outline. The head is powerful, though less happy than some others; it bears remains of the black paint on the scroll; the varnish is thick and rich in colour, browner and yellower than in the "Messiah," which is reddish. The back is in two parts, and the belly rises in excess of the "Messiah." A STRADIVARIUS violin, lent by M. E. LECOMTE (87), is finer than the "Pucelle," although the head is doubtful—probably an old French head—in other respects it is a masterpiece. One of the late MR. GILLOTT'S STRADIVARIUS violins (92), is a good specimen; but the varnish is poor thin stuff. The (140) GILLOTT'S so-called STRADIVARIUS tenor, is a very doubtful affair. The

belly and holes are very good, but the scroll is simply monstrous; the back and sides are of the poorest, coarsest wood; the corners hang down like those of an AMATI. STRADIVARIUS never cut them. They may be by GRANCINO, or more likely still, by BERGONZI, after STRADIVARIUS's death.

M. GALLAY's and M. F. PAWLE's STRADIVARIUS basses naturally attract us. The first, which was purchased for £800, has a finer scroll than the other, and is on the whole the best of the two. MR. and MRS. JAY's case of a STRADIVARIUS and two AMATIS, prove how the greatest masters may occasionally turn out commonplace and characterless instruments—these are not happy, though they are genuine specimens; the varnish for STRADIVARIUS is especially poor. 84 is an interesting, because late, weak, but undoubtedly genuine STRADIVARIUS. It shows the old man's failing powers, especially in the cutting of the belly, where the STRADIVARIUS curves are felt without being properly carried out. 93, in the "Messie" case is perhaps the finest JOSEPH GUARNERIUS in the world. The head is noble—stronger than the "Messie," though less delicate and beautiful; the whole instrument is to the "Messie" as a lion to a race-horse; the wood of the belly is splendid, so is the work throughout, but the conception is all for power and breadth, and the workman's tools were probably inferior to those of STRADIVARIUS. 94, dated 1735, lent by M. LOUIS D'EGVILLE, is another superb JOSEPH

236. ANTONIUS AND JOSEPH.

Guarnerius; 95 is a more coarse but characteristic specimen of the same maker, the property of Mr. Amherst, dated 1734.

237. DRAGONETTI'S BASSES.

There are no less than five basses once the property of Dragonetti, his favourite bass, a Gaspar di Salo, of 1580, is amongst them; and a monster presented by him to the Duke of Leinster, which would require a ladder to climb up to its head, stands alone, like the Pyramid of Cheops, looking down upon a race of pigmies; but besides size and ugliness it has no special qualities. 109 is one of the finest Bergonzis I ever saw, now the property of Mr. Hart. There are four miniature violins for children, all fine and all genuine. Two are by Stradivarius, one by Joseph Guarnerius, and one an Amati. They are the exquisite bantams of the craft. We must pass over several interesting specimens, but before we leave these cases we must note a few sad sights.

238. SOME LITTLE MISTAKES.

First, the Queen's Amati has been dreadfully cut down: it bears a raised pattern all round the belly, the old edge is gone, and the purfling has doubtless been injured, but is now much concealed by the raised work; 136 is another fine Amati cut down, and cruelly cut down; 139 is another Amati treated in the same way, but not so badly. Strange to say, 147, doubtless a Nicholas Amati, hung—although the error was pointed out, to the

end of the Exhibition—under the name of a MAGGINI viola! A KLOTZ tenor, belonging to the DUKE OF EDINBURGH, was called a STAINER, and hung as such. As it is an obvious KLOTZ, and as this, too, was pointed out, it should have been removed, especially as other violins, *e.g.* a spurious BERGONZI (110), sent in by MR. J. W. JOYCE, was judiciously removed after being hung. It is curious that the most glaring blot of all in this remarkable collection should have been suffered to remain to the close of the Exhibition without a word of apology or explanation long after the spurious instrument had been fully exposed, and its history given in detail. I allude to the famous so-called MAGGINI violin, sent up by MR. J. W. JOYCE, and hung by the judges.

This violin (No. 112), is now well known not to have been made by MAGGINI 200 years ago, but to have been copied by BERNHARD FENDT, about forty years ago. It was bought by worthy MR. STANHARD, who fiddled on it much in the Portsmouth Theatre. His widow advertised it in the *Clerkenwell News*, and it was sold for a few pounds to MR. NASH, a barber in the Commercial Road. It then passed into the hands of REV. THOMAS MAWKES. At last it got into the possession of MR. J. W. JOYCE, and was offered with another spurious instrument as a MAGGINI violin to the South Kensington Museum Loan Exhibition. And there it hung, rejoicing in its ill-gotten fame, like a second Claimant, in the teeth

of constant exposure and derision. Where the deception rests, it is not for me to say. These statements, which I have repeated in print several times, have been received in perfect silence by all parties concerned; and until that silence of living witnesses is broken we must in honour acquit everybody of fraud, and suppose that they have all been taken in; but the story is highly instructive, as showing the care required in passing judgment on old violins, and, I may add, the extreme unwillingness of self-elected connoisseurs to admit that they have been taken in.

I now part with our "old violins" with feelings not unmingled with regret; the very sums of money given for them bear witness to their strange indefinite value and importance. The owner of the "Messie" refused 600 guineas for that unique gem, whilst 800 and even 1,000 guineas have been offered by some who could not get their favourites for less.

239. PRICES.

And what is it that we pay for? A little wood, varnish, paint—a few shillings would buy all the materials; the simplest mechanical knowledge is sufficient to cut up and put together the common fiddle, which is now sold for ten or fifteen shillings, and looks to the novice so much more desirable than the "Messie," or "Pucelle," though not unlike them. Then what do we pay for? We pay for what no money can produce again; we pay for conditions that have passed away; we pay for the inspiration of a matchless

workman, and a subtle soul infused into elements which seem beggarly, but have become priceless; we pay for the concentrated experience of not one life, but many, put into a curve or a fluting—for a few thin plates of wood fixed together with an instinct that is dead, but that ere it died made those slips of wood almost immortal. There is no reason why the violin should ever wear out. It grows old with its perpetual youth. It sings over the grave of many generations. Time, that sometimes robs it of a little varnish, has no power over its anointed fabric—it need never be battered. The Joan Carlino viol is 320 years old, and still almost without a scratch. I wish to believe it genuine. The hard perennial substance steeped in the silicate-like varnish, has well-nigh turned to stone, but without losing a single quality of sweetness or resonance. The violin is the only fossil which still lives, and lives with a fulness of life and freshness that contrasts mysteriously enough with the failing, sickly, and withering generations of man. Even should mishaps bruise or break its beauty, it can be endlessly restored—it is never fit for death; it survives a thousand calamities; nay, even when cut up, dismembered, its several parts scattered through a dozen workshops and through 500 years, live on with a kind of metempsychosis in new forms, and still cling strangely to their individuality, so that men, taking up a patchwork violin, say—it is fine, the front is poor, the head is tame; but then, see, here is a Stradivarius back.

Thus human in its power and pathos, and superhuman in its immortal fabric, the violin reigns the prince of all instruments, and in the hands of a PAGANINI, an ERNST, or a JOACHIM, the joy and wonder of the civilised world.

Note on the Plate. It is next to impossible to draw a violin outline. The diagram does not profess to be quite accurate. Even photography seems to fail, as it cannot render truly the all-important variations of surface. The difference between a Guarnerius and a Stradivarius would hardly be appreciable in outline to an untrained eye. I have omitted to give more than one head scroll, because of the subtlety; and I have left out the double bass, because of its size. The "Kits" are almost dummies, used chiefly by dancing masters.

V.

INTERLUDE

ON THE OBLIVION OF GREAT MEN.

THE pathos of places. Few people are quite insensible to it. Religion consecrates Mount Olivet, Art crowns the Acropolis; and Rome, that grave of Empires, still draws its crowds of pilgrims, who seem never weary of passing to and fro between the Palaces of the Cæsars to the Mausoleum of the Popes.

240. HOUSES.

Yet there is a caprice in memory; one is taken and another left. As I write, CARLYLE's house in Cheyne Row is about to be sold—some say demolished. I had great difficulty, a few years ago, in discovering MAZZINI's house in the Fulham Road. Germany is thought to be more careful of such associations. I certainly notice the alacrity with which statues of her poets, councillors, and musicians, are placed in the town squares and parks; but only the other day, when I

was at Leipsic, I was struck by a singular case of oblivion and neglect. I inquired at Leipsic for the house in which MENDELSSOHN had lived and died. At last I found it. My search was not so prolonged or so interesting as in the case of the house of STRADIVARIUS at Cremona.

I found the house to be No. 21 König-strasse. The memorial tablet mentioned by BAEDEKER was gone. I made

241. I VISIT MENDELSSOHN'S HOUSE.

many fruitless inquiries. Good MR. REUTER, who lived there, at once left his office in the yard, and took me into the rooms where so much of the loveliest music was conceived and written between 1835–1847. The spacious flat of nine rooms all belonged to FELIX MENDELSSOHN. MR. REUTER showed me the large reception-room, and then took me into the sitting-room and bed-room, in which last the composer died. It is a little room, and those who remember the account of his death, and the numbers of people who seem to have been in and out of the room, can see at a glance how natural this was—supposing the sitting-room adjoining to have been full of friends. The court-yard, now used for bales of merchandise, and paved, was a garden in MENDELSSOHN'S time, and he lived in the back of the house, and latterly almost in two rooms, because of the quiet of the place. The REUTERS have had the fabric restored, and partitions removed, so that the house is substantially as MENDELSSOHN left it; but the bustle and commerce of Leipsic has enor-

mously increased since 1847, and in more senses than one the place knows him no more.

The world seems to have little need of the best of us when we are gone. The house is let—the photographs of
242. the dead disappear from the shop windows—
WHO REGARDS THE DEAD? there's a new foot on the floor—a new face in the street—a new name in all mouths. BEACONSFIELD—GARIBALDI—CARLYLE—EMERSON—'tis all one; your reputation must live in individual hearts: out of all your deeds one or two only will be remembered; of your words, a few phrases; of your books, a volume or so; but of a dozen that will continue to be printed only half that number will be read, and at the end of a century or two, perhaps a phrase or chapter only will survive. Few, indeed, are the producers of whom it can be said, as we may say of STRADIVARIUS—he is more alive now in the hearts of men than ever he was at Cremona.

After 200 years, every trace of his handiwork is eagerly sought out. Bits of it are thankfully, and not always honestly, secured. Time only increases our interest in
243. him, and enhances the value of his handicraft.
THE VITALITY OF STRADIVARIUS. Every fragment of wood which is thought to bear the mark of his chisel, is treasured like a gem, and the waste of his workshop was found sufficient to make the reputation of FRANCESCO BERGONZI and a host of

imitators. The rumour of a new STRADIVARIUS is like the rumour of a new RAPHAEL—the civilised world competes for the prize, and the sums which have been given for one of his violins—enormous as they may seem for a few thin strips of wood varnished and glued together—are probably nothing to the sums that a fine example of the master will fetch in the course of the next hundred years. Yet this man sold his violins for four pounds apiece, and a consignment of STRADIVARIUS violins sent to London in the last century were sent back to Italy again, and no one seemed willing to buy them, even at that moderate figure. I suppose in these days the city of Cremona is known to the outside world chiefly as the residence of STRADIVARIUS. I will now relate what befell me when I made a pilgrimage to that city in the year 1880 to seek for the house of ANTONIUS STRADIVARIUS.

VI.

STRADIVARIUS OF CREMONA—HIS HOUSE.

FOR years I had said to myself, I will go and see this house at Cremona. The violin is the king of instruments. STRADIVARIUS is the king of violin-makers. In the short space of about 130 years, from 1600 to 1730, all the greatest violins in the world were made. They sold the best of them for 10 golden louis,

244. MY THOUGHTS AT BRESCIA.

they sell the best of them for from 300 to 1,000 guineas. I was at Brescia. There, before 1600, worked the fathers of the violin—the men who began to get rid, one after another, of those lets and hindrances to tone, of those tubby shapes and faulty proportions which belong to the ancient Viol tribe. The names of MAGGINI and GASPAR DI SALO are for ever associated with those early experiments and with Brescia. They paved the way. They struck the types, violin, viola, violoncello, and double-bass out of the host of nondescript viols, Viol da Gamba, Viole d'Amore, Violetti, &c. &c. They decided upon the survival of the fittest—on what has actually survived—they paved the way for Cremona. Yet at Brescia their houses are unknown, there are no relics of them. Their only relics are in the hands of a few amateurs and a few museums. MR. TYSSEN-AMHERST has perhaps the finest known Gaspar violin; the Gaspar basses are more numerous. DRAGONETTI'S monster Gaspar is in the South Kensington—the only instrument by any decent violin-maker that *is* now in that museum. MR. ENTHOVEN has perhaps the finest known Maggini. And so the Brescian school, full of unique significance as it was, died and was buried, but not before it had yielded up its secrets to the AMATIS and GUARNERII who settled at Cremona. In the great square of St. Domenico the AMATI set up their shop; later, next door to them, worked the GUARNERII. About 1760, the young man named ANTONIUS STRADIVARI, or STRADIVARIUS, became, as we have seen, the devoted pupil

of NICOLAS, the greatest of the AMATI. ANDREW GUARNERIUS worked in the same room with him. ANTHONY copied NICOLAS's work as closely as he could; for more than twenty years he did little but copy.

These three names — AMATI, the GUARNERII, STRADIVARIUS—there be none like them; these three shops, almost next door to each other, opposite the big church of St. Dominic—there never were, nor will be, three such shops. In them were made, in long quiet years of peaceful, sunny labour, in steady and friendly rivalry, all the great violins in the world—the Joseph Guarnerius on which PAGANINI played, now in the town-hall at Genoa; the Stradivarius on which ERNST, and now MADAME NORMAN-NERUDA, plays; PIATTI's violoncello; JOACHIM's and WILHELMJ's "Strads." And the charm of these Brescian and Cremonese schools lies here, that in those days violin-making was a living, growing art, as Gothic architecture once was. Each maker was a discoverer with the enthusiasm and excitement of the unknown upon him, working out problems of tone, studying form, material, method, technique, with a view to new effects; spending a life-time over it. I have already shown at length how with STRADIVARIUS the art culminated, all was done that could be done; tone, sweetness, power, sensibility, sonority, all was won; and then the decline set in, love waxed cold, and men could no more reproduce the old work than they could paint the old pictures, or carve the old statues, or build the old cathedrals

So I said to myself at Brescia, I will go and see where the great STRADIVARIUS lived for ninety-three years, and loved and laboured with such absorbed and steadfast earnestness and such wondrous cunning, that for 180 years hardly a capital of the civilised world has ceased to do homage to his power, a power that is felt and loved ever more and more, and looked forward to year by year, as, with the return of JOACHIM, SARASATE, NORMAN-NERUDA, WILHELMJ, the mighty soul of STRADIVARIUS again speaks to thousands, and with one touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

Everyone, I said, will know the house of STRADIVARIUS at Cremona; not even the magnificent cathedral, with its almost unique façade, is so famous as the name of the great violin-maker; Cremona itself is known to the outside world by nothing else.

245. NOT KNOWN.

So I got into a cab at the station.

"Drive," said I, "to the *casa* of ANTONIUS STRADIVARI."

"What casa?" said the man; "I do not know the name."

"Not know the name of STRADIVARIUS, the great violin-maker!"

"I don't think he lives here; they don't make violins at Cremona."

"Perhaps not," said I, a little nettled, "but they used to. STRADIVARIUS, and JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and the AMATI made them."

"Upon my oath and the holy name of the Virgin, I

assure you, Signor, they never made any violins at Cremona; you are mistaken."

The driver's temper was giving way, so was mine.

"Per Bacco!" said I, as I thought under the circumstances I might swear by a heathen god; "drive to the cathedral!"

So he drove.

246. TO THE CATHEDRAL.

The splendour of those red marble lions couchant, supporting the marble columns both of the cathedral porch and of the adjacent baptistery, the exquisite terra-cotta work and double colonnaded façade, and the great Campanile, at any other time would have tempted me to linger, but not now. I entered and cast but a languid eye upon the rich and ancient tapestries and profuse decoration in mosaic and fresco which cover every inch of the interior. The sacristan was lighting a few candles in the darkness over the high altar. I made towards him; he came down.

"Can you tell me where STRADIVARIUS is buried?" said I, thinking it might be better to begin at the other end this time.

"Oh, Signor," he said with a smile, "thank the blessed saints and all the martyrs, STRADIVARIUS is not dead; the *avocat* is alive and in good health!"

"Ah, well," said I, "but where would he be buried if he were dead?"

"You mean, where is the family sepulchre? I should think it would be in the Campo Santo: it is not here. But I can show you the house of STRADIVARI the *avocat*, it is number three in the Corso Porta Roma," and he politely came out of the cathedral and showed me the way.

I shall now get on the scent. This advocate is no doubt a descendant; he will be able to tell me all that is known. I rang at the bell. Alas! the advocate was out of town, gone to Milan, so were all the family.

I got into another cab.

"Do you know the Piazza of Domenico?" I said, this time approaching the subject warily.

247.
THE CITIZENS OF CREMONA.

"There is no such place, Signor." This fairly staggered me.

"Well," I said, "I know the church has been pulled down, but can you show me where it stood?"

"Ah!" said the man, "yes; they call it now the Piazza Roma."

"'Tis this abominable centralising spirit," I growled to myself; "this conceited new country, this pert Italia Una; can they not leave Tuscany alone? Piazza Roma! forsooth, what has Roma got to do with Cremona? I don't mind yonder VIA GARIBALDI, for he did as much for the north as for the south; and VICTOR EMANUEL may have his statue here too, for he was a gallant Piedmontese; but why is Rome to come in and rub out the square sacred to St. Dominic,

and destroy the very name dear to the memories and sacred to the sepulchres of the AMATI and of STRADIVARIUS?"

"Drive," I said, "to that square," and he drove.

Then I stopped, and stood up in the carriage, and accosted my man much as follows: "My friend, do you not know that in this ancient square of St. Dominic lived and worked those great violin-makers who have made your city famous throughout the world, and that here somewhere is still the house of the greatest of them, STRADIVARIUS? Can you not show me that house?"

"Signor," said the man, not wishing to appear ignorant, "I think that the person you mean who made violins is dead. He died some years ago; I don't know his house, but here is a man passing."

"Pst! stop him!" I cried; so he stopped him.

"We seek," I said, "the house of the great STRADIVARIUS."

"Indeed," replied this citizen of Cremona, "I have heard of him, but I fear he is dead. He made fiddles—old fiddles. Pst!" said the man, stopping another passer-by. "Do you know anything of one STRADIVARIUS, who made fiddles—old fiddles?"

I was still standing up in my carriage, and we now had quite a little crowd round us. They were all Cremonese. Some had heard of the advocate STRADIVARI, no one knew anything of the immortal ANTONIUS STRADIVARIUS of Cremona, although scarce 150 years ago his body had been laid

in the little chapel of the Rosary (since pulled down with the church), in all probability was still lying but a short stone's-throw off the little group that stood round my carriage; yet, not a soul knew his name.

At last one man stepped forward and said, "Sir, if STRADIVARIUS has been dead some time, and you seek his relics, the antiquary round the corner might have heard of him." This was all I could gather.

"A thousand thanks!" I lifted my hat, the little crowd lifted theirs.

"Drive," I said, "to the antiquary!"

He drove; the antiquary was out, but his wife directed us to a certain house in a side street not far from the square of St. Dominic. I drew up in front of that house. Two men looked out of one window, three girls looked out of another.

"Is this," I shouted, "the house of STRADIVARIUS?"

"No, the advocate——"

"Stop," I cried, "do not speak of him; I seek not the advocate—I know where he lives—I seek the house of the great STRADIVARIUS" (I turned to the girls), "a maker of violins!"

"He doesn't live here, he's dead. He doesn't make violins," they said, laughing.

Then another roguish maiden, with eyes full of mischief: "Yes, this is his house; he used to live here; he died here."

"Then, may I come up? I want to see that room where he died."

Another young lady here put her head out: two of them were for letting me come up, and the others seemed neutral.

"Look here!" said an elderly grey-headed man at another window; "If the gentleman wants anything, I will come down—wait. I know," said he, "whom you seek—do not attend to these light-headed girls—you seek the house of STRADIVARIUS, who made the famous violins; he died more than a hundred years ago; his house is still on the Piazza, nearly opposite where the old church of St. Dominic stands. It is not here, but this is the interesting manufactory of SIGNOR CERITO; we will show it you, too, if you have time."

"I pray you," said I, "as my time is short, tell me where is the *casa* of the great STRADIVARI."

"Signor, it is No. 2 Piazza Roma."

"I thank you from my heart," I said with a sigh of infinite relief and a low bow to all the heads out of the windows. Then to my coachman, "Drive," I said, "to No. 2 Piazza Roma." He drove.

A bright boy of the middle classes, well dressed and polite, opened the door.

248. I ENTER THE HOUSE OF STRADIVARIUS.

"Tell me," I said; "I would see the rooms where STRADIVARI used to live."

"Come in," said he; "I dare say they will

let you come up; there is nothing much to see; he died here."

I entered the narrow passage; beyond it there was a little square court-yard paved with old flagstones. To the left, a narrow dark staircase led up to the second story. I could no longer doubt that I was in the house of STRADIVARIUS—indeed, the only traditional direction I had come to Cremona with was "in the Square of St. Dominico, opposite the Façade," and this house was quite near enough to correspond to that description. At the top of the first flight, a beautiful Italian girl made her appearance—the boy said she was his sister—then an elder brother, then another boy. This was all the family I saw—it was enough; they were evidently intelligent tradespeople, and knew enough for my purpose. The young man said, "The Professor——"

"Who is the Professor?" I asked.

"The Professor STRADIVARIUS," he answered, "who made violins—but ever so long ago—inhabited these rooms, and he died here, but we cannot tell which room he died in."

"It matters not," said I; "where did he work?"

"Do you really want to see where he made the violins? We never go up there—it is very dirty—but if you will see, you must ascend."

I went first, followed by the little family, who evidently thought me quite eccentric, but were extremely polite. Higher and higher; at last we came to the top of the house

"It's higher still," said the boy, and he pointed to a little decayed ladder which at a glance I could see was only used for certain fowls to roost on. It was very dirty: but the boy went up, and I followed; even the pretty sister gathered up her skirts daintily and joined us; the young man came last. Through a trap-door covered with cobwebs I soon emerged on to a sort of loft about twelve feet square. It was still soundly roofed with tiles and fine old beams and rafters. It was entirely exposed to light and air on the north and the west, like an open barn, but walled on the south, with two windows, and walled on the east; heavy rafters went all round, supported on solid upright beams. "Here," said my host, "is where the Professor made the violins."

I thought of the gorgeous studios in which our modern artists and sculptors think it necessary to work. I looked round, and I saw all the conditions which STRADIVARIUS required to produce those beautiful creations—miracles of carving, design, and subtle cabinet-work—which are still the delight of collectors who seldom hear them, of players who find in them a soul of matchless sensibility, of makers who copy endlessly without ever being able to reproduce them, and of the whole musical world which has long hung spell-bound upon their magical vibrations.

249. STRADIVARIUS'S WORKSHOP.

I looked, and looked again. The genial and kindly

Italian family standing there with me observed that I was absorbed and serious, and, with the kindest courtesy, kept silent. And I saw out upon the north the wide blue sky, and upon the west the wide blue sky just mellowing to a rich purple, and flaked here and there with orange streaks prophetic of sunset. Whenever STRADIVARIUS looked up from his work—if he looked north, his eye fell on the old towers of St. Marcellino and St. Omobono; if he looked west, the cathedral, with its tall campanile, rose dark against the sky—and what a sky!—full of clear sun in the morning, full of pure heat all day, and bathed with ineffable tints in the cool of the evening, when the light lay low upon vinery and hanging garden, or spangled with ruddy gold the eaves, the roofs, and frescoed walls of the houses.

Yes, after all, the conditions were good—good for distilling the rare gums in the natural heat; good for soaking the oil and varnish into the backs and bellies and ribs of maple and deal; good for drying leisurely day by day every polished and moulded surface and smooth strip as it hung up against the open blue sky, winnowed by the light winds as they rose and fell with spicy odours from the distant Alps.

Here, up in the high air, with the sun his helper, the light his minister, the blessed soft airs his journeymen, what time the workaday noise of the city rose, and the sound of Matins and Vespers was in his ears, through the long warm summer days worked STRADIVARIUS, drew in the clear light his curves of strength and beauty, cut with

free hand his scrolls, rounded and chiselled with a loving eye those surfaces which resemble nothing so much as the gentle and undulating curves and satiny texture of a smooth human body. From this high laboratory, where the master seemed so far above the earth, so near to Heaven, I said it was meet that such melodious and seraphic ministers should descend to be the delight and solace of our sad and discordant world. Here was shaped the "Pucelle"; here was conceived the graceful, sweet, and ringing "Dolphin" Strad.; here, too, was formed and perfected that wondrous violin which, in the hands of ERNST, and never since, drew tears and laughter from enchanted multitudes, until it was difficult to believe that the spirits of the dead were not employing its pathetic vibrations to convey to mortals the expression of their infinite longings and ineffable aspirations.

250. A NAIL IN A BEAM.

I suppose my eyes were raised involuntarily as I stood facing the north, looking over a wilderness of roofs to the great churches beyond. The young man evidently thought I was looking at the thick beam that supported the roof on that side. He climbed up so as to touch it, and felt along the inside. "Here," he said, "the Professor hung up his violins. You can see how old and worn is the beam; and here and there is a crooked rusty nail on which the violins hung."

A sudden thought worthy of a Vandal seized me: "I will possess one of those nails." I at once invented several

excuses for myself, some of them very good ones. 1st. No one else cared for the nail. 2nd. It would simply rot there and be lost. 3rd. Probably no one would ever notice it again if left. 4th. No one would miss it. 5th. STRADIVARIUS would not want it again. 6th. I wanted it myself. This last was the best excuse I could think off. So I said to the young man, "Whilst you are up there, do you know, I should very much value one of those old nails; could you get it for me?"

"Certainly," said he, "if you want it; but it is so very old and rotten, I can't draw it; it is sure to break."

"Never mind," said I. He did not mind. The nail did break, and I got all of it that STRADIVARIUS ever used to hang his fiddles on.

My mission was accomplished. I looked round upon that simple, kindly, picturesque Italian family—the young man, his two young brothers, the pretty sister.

251. "ADDIO!" "What shall I say to thank you for your kindness to me?"

"Nothing," said the young man, laughing; "we don't want anything: we are glad if you are pleased; people don't often come to see the house—just one or two have been at long intervals."

"At least," I said, "let me give these nice little boys something to buy toys with, for they opened the door and have been such good little guides;" and I placed a few

francs in the hands of the astonished little fellows, who seemed doubtful; but the pretty sister laughed, and they took the francs with many joyful salutations.

As I went down-stairs, I met the grey-headed man who had told me of the house coming up. He had actually, with true Italian curiosity, come all the way to see if I had really gone there.

"So, so!" he said, "you have found the house where the Professor once lived?"

"Yes," I said; "I have seen the house of STRADIVARIUS. Addio!"

VI.

INTERLUDE

ON SOME OLD VIOLIN PLAYERS.

252. VIOLINS AND VIOLINISTS.

WHETHER violins are due to violinists, or violinists to violins, is like that other puzzle of whether the owl was before the egg, or the egg before the owl. Thus much, however, is certain: that until that special modification of the viol which we call violin was hit upon, there could not be a violin-player; so we may affirm that, in a sense, the violin preceded violinists. It is equally certain that the growth of part-singing, and the advancing art of modern music, rendered the players of stringed instruments impatient with the tubby tone and clumsy proportions of the old viols, and that, in order to satisfy the increasing demand for tone and quality, the viol-makers tried various experiments, until at last they hit upon the violin type, improving their instruments to order as

Erard and Broadwood were forced to increase the strength, mechanism, and tone of their pianos to meet the extraordinary, and apparently insatiable, requirements of Liszt and Thalberg.

Giovanni Battista Lulli, 1590, about whom I know little more, was the first man who asserted, by his excellent playing, the superiority of the new violin over the old viols. With Lulli (1633–1687) the "petit violon" became fashionable at the French Court. Lulli was a cook, but the Comte de Nogent, hearing him play in the kitchen, brought him straight to Madame de Montpensier, and he was soon afterwards installed as Court musician to Louis XIV. The "Petits Violons du Roi"—the name of a Court band organised by Lulli—soon became famous. Lulli himself was not only a good cook and fine fiddler, but an excellent actor and a merry fellow to boot.

253. LULLI

Molière was very partial to him, and would say in company, when the conversation flagged, "Come, Battista, make us laugh."

I find it impossible to make out wherein Lulli's violin-playing excelled that of his predecessors; but as there were during his life-time no two opinions on that question, I must take it for granted in his favour.

With Corelli (1653–1713) I touch firmer ground. We

can see at a glance that he was contemporaneous with the finest period of STRADIVARIUS. As a contrast to the French butterfly LULLI, CORELLI was "un homme serieux." His style was elaborate and methodical; his music full of a fancy and variety which even the stiffness of the old form cannot disguise. His trios form the basis of modern chamber music, and his *concertos* laid the foundation of the grand violin style.

254. CORELLI.

He was the first *maestro* who insisted on his band all bowing in the same way. The fine effect thus produced is seldom, if ever, heard in England. We must go to Vienna and Paris to see that uniform *Coup d'archêt* which, in an orchestra, is as striking to the eye as it is agreeable to the ear. CORELLI met HANDEL at the house of that famous patron of music, CARDINAL OTTOBONI, at Rome. The great violinist took an odd view of HANDEL'S genius. "My dear Saxon," he said to him, "your music is in the French style, which I do not understand." CORELLI'S interview with another illustrious professor was far from fortunate. He seems at Naples to have met SCARLATTI and played one of his adagios in C major instead of C minor. On discovering his error, he was so much annoyed, that he left the town immediately. He was very sensitive to rivalry, and had the mortification—like most great executive musicians who go on too long—to see younger artists preferred to himself. Posterity has been more kind. His body lies close to that

of RAFFAELE in the Pantheon. His tablet is inscribed with the simple but conclusive motto:

"*Corelli princeps musicorum.*"

Between 1640 and 1729 we had some very good violin players in England. One BALTZAR led the king's (CHARLES II.) band. His execution was wonderful. He was a sad drunkard, and they buried him in Westminster Abbey. The BANNISTERS, father and son, in 1672, proves that Englishmen could also play the violin. They started a concert, "1*s.* admission, and call for what you please." The fiddling was held at the "George Tavern," Whitefriars. BANNISTER himself did wonders on the flageolet, violin, and double-bass, and each performer had his solo. The concerts took place in the dark winter afternoons, and, by all accounts, the game seems to have been fairly worth the candle.

255. BALTZAR AND THE BANNISTERS.

TARTINI (1692–1770) added that element of romance and fancy to violin playing, without which, in my opinion, the most classical violinist fails as a true exponent of his instrument or his art. TARTINI's method was elaborate and concise. To him we owe that attention to exact intonation which raises the violin strings to an equality with the sensibility of the vocal chords. His observation of the *third* sound which resonates sympatheti-

256. TARTINI.

cally when the two upper notes of a chord of three are in perfect time, and the great stress which he laid on this, points to the perfection of his ear. He made his pupils listen for the effect.

"If you do not perceive the *third* sound, your thirds and sixths are not in tune," he would say.

TARTINI lengthened the bow. The violin bow grew until it attained at last the PAGANINI and ERNST dimensions of a yard long. At first it resembled more the chopper-like implement still used for grunting on the double-bass. It would be difficult to play the famous *Trille du Diable*—the best known of TARTINI's compositions, which still holds the concert-room—with the old-fashioned bow used by CORELLI or HAZZE. TARTINI's own account, though a little stale, of the way in which he composed his famous solo, may as well be quoted, as it is not always that we can get a legend first hand.

"One night, 1713," he writes, "I dreamt that I had made a compact with the devil, who promised to be at my service on all occasions. Everything I undertook succeeded; my wishes were anticipated, and my desires always surpassed. At last I determined to offer the devil my violin, as I was anxious to know what kind of a fiddler he might be. To my astonishment he played a solo so beautiful, with such exquisite taste and finish, that never had I heard or conceived of anything so lovely and marvellous. Overcome with surprise and delight, I held my breath, and

the effort awoke me. I seized my violin in the hope of recalling the magic strains—in vain! Still, a vague impression remained, which I instantly endeavoured to jot down. My *Sonata del Diavolo* is the result. It is doubtless the best of all my compositions."

Closely allied to the romantic element is TARTINI's last contribution to the progress of violin playing, his power of exquisite "phrasing." He was the finest cantabile player of his day. NARDINI, his best pupil, carried on the tradition, for in the "adagio" he had no equal after TARTINI's death. TARTINI died at Padua, where he had lived for nearly fifty years. He was a great philosopher, a great lover of books, a mathematician, and a man of highly religious and philanthropic character. He had seen CORELLI, lived long enough to admire HANDEL, play HAYDN, and even hear MOZART. He left many pupils, amongst them a lady—MDLLE. DE SIRMEN—who achieved a European reputation, and was by some preferred to all his other pupils.

GIARDINI (1716–1793) was famous for his "embroideries." This, I suppose, consisted in those elegant flourishes and cadenzas which, in the hands of PAGANINI and his school on the violin, and in the hands of CHOPIN and his school on the piano, received their latest and apparently ultimate developments. Towards the end of GIARDINI's life, the great qualities of the STRADIVARI and GUARNERII

violins were beginning to assert themselves. The quartets of HAYDN had immensely enhanced the dignity of the violin. A demand for tone was rapidly arising, and GIARDINI was as famous for the sweep of his bow and the sonority of his tone, as for the delicacy and charm of his "embroideries."

BOCCHERINI, by the enormous number of his compositions, did much to spread the taste for chamber music. A fragment or two of his compositions may occasionally be heard at the Monday Popular Concerts. He was a favourite with princes, and composed nine works annually for the Royal Academy of Madrid, where he died, aged sixty-six, in 1806, three years before the death of HAYDN. The KING OF SPAIN was fond of playing with BOCCHERINI, and the EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA occasionally joined them in a trio. The Emperor one day asked BOCCHERINI whether he played better than CHARLES IV.; upon which the diplomatic musician replied, "Sire, CHARLES IV. plays like a king, but Your Imperial Highness plays like an Emperor!" It would be impossible to say less, but difficult to say more. It was the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

257
BOCCHERINI.

Most people are agreed that VIOTTI (1755–1824) was the man who summed up in himself the progress of the

violin in the 18th century, and made possible the startling
258. developments which are connected with the
VIOTTI, RODE, DE BERIOT. names of De Beriot, and, above all, with Paganini and Ernst. Viotti prolonged further the bow. In his days the internal bar supporting the old violin bellies had to be strengthened to bear the increased strain of the gradually rising pitch which gave such additional brilliancy to violin tone. His tone was powerful, his style broad, and his phrasing noble.

He wrote music abounding in flowing melody and pleasant harmonies. His concertos long held the concert-room, but were ousted by Rode, then by De Beriot, who, in his turn, was displaced by Ernst, Wieniawski, and Vieuxtemps.

De Beriot had a very considerable run of about fifty years, for his music has only disappeared from concert programmes within the last ten years, and is still popular with novices.

Paganini's music cannot be said to have displaced that of any concert-room composer. Only a few of his concertos were ever heard after his death, generally played by Sivori, and then no one pretended that they sounded the same as when Paganini played them.

Rode, Mori, and Labarre, were all pupils of Viotti. Mori taught my old master, Oury, in his youth, and Oury numbered amongst his pupils George Macfarren, Sterndale Bennett, and the Earl of Falmouth, an excellent amateur.

I have now entered upon the golden age of violinists. KREUTZER produced studies for the violin which are already classical, and which, in my opinion, have never been surpassed in excellence, variety, and even fine musical taste. I have no intention here to mention all the celebrated names of violinists which are, unfortunately, to modern ears little but names; only those who serve as landmarks of the art deserve, as it were, a bust and pedestal in the corridor through which I am now passing, to contemplate at leisure the great figure which stands at the end of it—NICOLO PAGANINI.

259. KREUTZER, SPOHR, PAGANINI.

I suppose that SPOHR's violin school is likely to hold its place as a comprehensive class book, though I am told that modern professors have a perfect mania for introducing shorter manuals of their own invention. However, no one can ignore the fact that SPOHR did more than any of his predecessors to overcome the difficulties of chromatic scales, octave, and chord-playing on the violin, although his curious antipathy to harmonies and everything that savoured of trickery on the violin left the field open to PAGANINI.

They were both born in the same year, 1784, and it is pleasing to note PAGANINI's generous appreciation and sincere respect for SPOHR's abilities, whilst it would be difficult to mention two artists more diametrically opposed to each other in taste, temperament, and achievement. When PAGANINI burst like a comet upon the musical world, DE BERIOT had already reaped his laurels in England,

and, notwithstanding the unique popularity of PAGANINI, DE BERIOT, by his compositions, as well as by the charm of his phrasing, the roundness of his tone, and the exquisite purity of his taste, retained his hold over the musical public until his eye-sight began to fail him, and his nerve gave way. He married MALIBRAN, who was bled to death by the doctors, and he died at St. Petersburg, quite blind, only in 1870. DE BERIOT's name is intimately associated with the great violin school of Belgium, over which the lamented VIEUXTEMPS presided so ably for so many years. I now wish to concentrate the attention of my readers upon that imposing personality—that strange uncouth figure which stands out unique amongst the executive musicians of the 19th century. Nothing like him seems ever to have appeared before—nothing approaching him as a solo sensation, except LISZT, has appeared since. At one bound he reached a goal of violin-playing to which, after an interval of nearly fifty years, there seems to be no beyond. He sounded the marvellous depths and resources of the most marvellous of all instruments, and has apparently left nothing for future explorers to discover.

VIII.

PAGANINI.

260. A NEW APPARITION.

Who is this man who rises up suddenly in the world of music, and whose fame passes with the brightness and rapidity of a meteor through the civilised world; who, at the moment when Baillot, Spohr, Rode, and Lafont seemed to have explored the heights and depths of the violin, opened up new vistas full of strange, unparalleled mysteries, and gave us glimpses into a hell, purgatory, and paradise beyond the dreams even of Dante—whose gaunt and supernatural figure startled and fascinated the crowds that thronged about him, a solitary man amongst men, but so unlike them, that he seemed to belong to another race, and to discourse in the weird music of another world—who bowed to none, yet was idolised by all—whose engagements were negotiated by kings and ministers—who could spurn the prayers of princes and grand duchesses, and yet received honour at their hands, and was alternately decorated by the Pope, and anathematized by the clergy;—who was this exceptional being reigning supreme for forty years without a rival over the conflicting schools of Italy, Germany, and France,

at whose approach the greatest masters confessed themselves vanquished — who, although he set the fashions, infected whole populations, invented a new school, yet, in his own peculiar greatness, had no masters, no equals, and has left no followers? This man, who has stamped so indelible an impression of himself upon the musical world, whilst his name will survive as the synonym of wonder and mystery to the remote ages—this Hercules of the Violin was NICOLO PAGANINI.

PAGANINI PÈRE ET MÈRE.

261. That a man's grandmother, or even his father and mother, are of some consequence when he derives lustre or gain from them of any kind, no one will deny; but when he sheds back upon them the only kind of reflex glory which they are capable of receiving, the glory of an imperishable name, no one will blame the biographer for skipping a few dull and stupid antecedents.

PAGANINI *père* may have been a street porter, as some pretend; or a small tradesman, as others, probably in the right, affirm. He was a sharp man; he was a cruel man; he did overmuch to develop his son's talents, and overmuch to ruin his health, and, probably, is chargeable with having destroyed his mental and moral equilibrium for life. NICOLO's mother was a sweet, amiable woman—she loved her boy, she believed in him, she often stood between him and the rod, she prayed for him, and saw one night in a

vision a celestial being, who told her that the boy would become the greatest violinist that ever lived. How far this dream, which she lost no time in communicating to father and son, increased the father's severity, and fired the boy's ambition, we cannot tell; but the dream seems to have been a well-established fact, and years afterwards, when the mother was old, and the son at his zenith, she reminded him of it, as of an incident which had been familiar to both of them throughout their lives.

In these early days of boyhood were probably laid the seeds of that idiosyncrasy of temperament which became at once the glory and curse of his life. Little as we know about the human brain, it is tolerably certain that its particles move in physical grooves and acquire methodical arrangements, which correspond to what we call mental qualities and states of mind. Illness may perpetuate some, and modify others. Great severity may have a similar effect; recurrent outward action, for instance, may create intense propensity in certain directions, and thus impart the perseverance of mania to inward dispositions; the nervous system at the same time, if it does not break down, becomes over-developed, and is then endowed with an almost supernatural sensibility. Something of this kind appears to have been the case with PAGANINI; he was by nature very delicate. At four years old he was nearly buried alive; he lay for a whole day

262. SEVERE EARLY TRAINING.

in a state of catalepsy, and was already placed in his shroud, when he revived, but with a nervous system which from that time forward showed signs of a strange and unnatural susceptibility. By his own temperament, as soon as he could hold the violin he was urged to an intense and dangerous application—for the least fault he was severely beaten by his father, which seemed only to increase an ardour which should, for his own sake, have been rather moderated. Precocity was still further forced on by starvation. Had it not been for his mother, he might never have survived this brutal treatment. We shall see by-and-by how lovingly he remembered her in the midst of his triumphs.

PAGANINI was born at Genoa on the 10th February 1784. After exhausting his father's instruction, he was taken in hand by SIGNOR SERVETTO, of the Genoese theatre; then GIACOMO COSTA, chapel master, taught him, and the child was often seen playing in the Genoese churches on a violin almost as large as himself; but, like MOZART before him, and MENDELSSOHN after him, NICOLO was the despair of his masters, who were in turn angry with his innovations, and astonished at his precocious facility. In his ninth year he appeared at a concert, and electrified everyone with variations on the French air, *La Carmagnole*. This triumph impelled his avaricious father to discover someone who could

263. THE DESPAIR OF HIS MASTERS.

further teach him; the young talent was to be pressed and squeezed to its utmost limit, in order to produce the golden harvest.

At Parma lived the celebrated musician ROLLA. To ROLLA was the boy taken; but ROLLA was ill. Whilst waiting in the ante-room little NICOLO took up a violin, and played off at sight some difficult music which he found lying on the table. The invalid composer raised himself on his bed to listen, and eagerly inquired who the great master was who had arrived, and was playing in his ante-room? "A mere lad!—impossible!" but on PAGANINI'S making his appearance as an humble pupil, ROLLA at once told him that he could teach him nothing. Thence to PAËR, who was glad to make his difficult charge over to GHIRETTI, and this master gave him three lessons a week in harmony and counterpoint. It is not clear that this extraordinary genius owed much more to anyone but himself—his indomitable perseverance and his incessant study. His method is to be noted. For ten or twelve hours he would try passages over and over again in different ways with such absorption and intensity, that at nightfall he would sink into utter prostration through excessive exhaustion and fatigue. Though delicate, like MENDELSSOHN, he ate at times ravenously, and slept soundly. When about ten he wrote twenty-four fugues, and soon afterwards composed some violin music, of such difficulty, that he was unable at first to play it, until incessant practice gave him the mastery.

In 1797 PAGANINI, being then thirteen years old, made his first professional tour; but not as a free agent. His father took him through the chief towns of Lombardy, and, not unnaturally, prescribed the task and pocketed the proceeds. But the young neck was already beginning to chafe against the yoke. In 1798 he escaped, with his father's tardy consent, to Lucca, where a musical festival in honour of St. Martin was going on. He there gave frequent concerts, and was everywhere met with applause, and, what was more to the purpose, with money. Surrounded by men of inferior talents, a mere inexperienced boy, without education, without knowledge of the world, with nothing but ambition and his supreme musical genius, he now broke wildly away from all wise restraints, and avenged himself upon his father's severity by many youthful excesses. He gambled—he lost—he was duped by his companions; but he made money so fast, that he soon owned about £1,000. It is pleasant to think that he at once thought of giving some of this to his father and mother; it is unpleasant to record that his father claimed, and eventually got, almost the whole sum from him. But it did not much matter now, for everything seemed literally to turn into gold beneath those marvellous fingers, and bad luck proved nearly as profitable to him as good.

264. PLAYING AND GAMBLING.

By the time he had reached seventeen, PAGANINI was a confirmed gambler. He had little left but his Stradi-

varius violin, and this he was on the point of selling to a
265. certain prince, who had offered him £80, a large
HOW HE LOST AND WON VIOLINS. sum at the beginning of this century even for a Stradivarius. Times have changed, and in these latter days we think nothing of giving £300 for a genuine instrument of the first class. But the reckless youth determined to make a last stand for his violin. "Jewels, watch, rings, brooches," to use his own words, "I had disposed of all—my thirty francs were reduced to three. With this small remains of my capital I played, and won 160 francs! This amount saved my violin, and restored my affairs. From that time," he adds, "I abjured gaming, to which I had sacrificed a part of my youth, convinced that a gamester is an object of contempt to all well-regulated minds." The violin he narrowly missed losing was given him by PARSINI the painter, who on one occasion brought, him a concerto of extraordinary difficulty to read at sight, and, placing a fine Stradivarius in his hands, said, "This instrument shall be yours if you can play that concerto at first sight in a masterly manner." "If that is the case," replied PAGANINI, "you may bid adieu to it"; and, playing it off at once, he retained the violin. Easy come—easy go. Some years later, at Leghorn, being again in great straits, he was obliged to part, for a time at least, with this same Stradivarius; but this disaster was only the means of procuring him the favourite Guarnerius, upon which he ever afterwards played. In his need, Monsieur LIVRON, a dis-

tinguished amateur, lent him this splendid instrument, and was so enraptured by his playing that he exclaimed, "Never will I profane the strings that your fingers have touched. It is to you that my violin belongs." This violin is still shown at Genoa under a glass case.

266. A RESPITE FROM TOIL.

At the age of seventeen PAGANINI appears to have been entirely his own master—weak in health, nervous, irritable, and excitable; his wild and irregular habits and pursuits were, at this critical age, threatening to hurry him to an early grave, when an event occurred which, although but too characteristic of the looseness of Italian manners, probably saved his life.

Suddenly, in the midst of new discoveries and unexampled successes, PAGANINI ceased to play the violin. He retired into the depths of the country, and devoted himself for three years to agricultural pursuits, and to the society of a lady of rank who had carried him off to her Tuscan estate, and to the guitar. With the sole exception of the late REGONDI, no such genius had ever been concentrated upon this limited and effeminate instrument. But the lady's taste ran that way, and the great violinist lavished for a time the whole force of his originality and skill upon the light guitar. He wrote music for it, and imitated it on the violin, but seldom touched it in after life until quite the close, although, as we shall presently see, he was able to produce a prodigious effect upon it when he chose.

These years of country life and leisure, during which he was delivered from the pressure of crowds, the excitement of public performances, and, most of all, the grinding anxieties of life, had the effect of bracing him up in health, and prepared him for that reaction towards intense study and exhausting toil which left him without a rival—the first violinist in the world.

In 1804 he returned to Genoa, where he seems, amongst other things, to have given lessons to a young girl of fifteen, named CATHERINE CALCAGNO, who appears to have caught something of his style, and to have astonished Italy for a few years, but after 1816 we hear no more of her. And now the neglected violin was taken up once again, but this time with maturer powers and settled intentions. There is a strange thoroughness about PAGANINI—nothing which any previous musician knew or had done must be unknown or left undone by him; there was to be no hitting him between the joints of his armour; no loop-hole of imperfection anywhere. He now occupied himself solely with the study of his instrument, and with composition — wrote four grand quartettes for violin, viol, guitar, and violoncello; and bravura variations with guitar accompaniment. At the age of twenty-one (1805) he made a second professional tour, passing through Lucca and Piombino, and in one convent church where he played a concerto, the excitement was so

267. STUDY AND COMPOSITION.

great that the monks had to leave their seats to silence the uproar in the congregation. It was at the end of this tour that NAPOLEON'S sister, the PRINCESS ELIZA, offered the new violinist the direction of the Court music, and gave him the grade of captain in the Royal Guard, with the privilege of wearing that officer's brilliant uniform on state occasions.

Between 1805 and 1812, whilst in the service of the PRINCESS ELIZA, afterwards GRAND DUCHESS OF TUSCANY,

268. FEELING AFTER EFFECT.

PAGANINI probably reached his acme of power, if not of fame. He had for years been at work upon new effects and combinations, but, at the very time when each new exploit was being greeted with frantic applause, he betook himself to an exhaustive study of the old masters. Something he seemed to be groping after—some clue he wished to find. How often had he thrown over VIOTTI, PUGNANI, KREUTZER, how often had he returned to their works! All were found utterly inadequate to suggest to him a single fresh thought, and it was nothing short of a new world that he was bound to discover.

In studying the ninth work of LOCATELLI, entitled *L'Arte de Nuova Modulazione* his brain was set suddenly agoing in the peculiar direction of his new aspirations. Every original genius seeks some such clue or point of departure. Something in LOCATELLI'S method inflamed

PAGANINI with those conceptions of simultaneous notes struck in different parts of the instrument; the hitherto unknown management of the screws, in which the violin was tuned all sorts of ways to reach effects never heard before or since; the harmonic flying out at all points, the arpeggios and pizzicatos, of which more anon; these which were in after years brought to such perfection, were born out of infinite study and practice, under the stimulating influence of the GRAND DUCHESS and her Court.

269. PLAYING ON ONE STRING.

It is at this season of his life that PAGANINI appears most like other people; the idol of the Court, untouched as yet by any definite malady, occupying an official post, and systematically labouring to perfect a talent which already seemed too prodigious to belong to any one man,—all conditions seemed most favourable to his peace and pleasure, could they have only lasted, but this was not possible. They continued until he had achieved the last step in the ladder of consummate skill, and no longer. Probably all his executive peculiarities were developed at this time. It was at Florence, for instance (and not in a prison), that PAGANINI first played upon only two—the first and fourth—strings, and then upon one—the fourth—string. Being in love with a lady of the Court, who reciprocated his attachment, he gave out that he would depict upon his violin a *Scène Amoureuse*; the treble string, we presume, was the lady, and the fourth string the gentle-

man. The emotional dialogue was carried on between the two in a manner which fairly overcame the audience with delight, and led to the GRAND DUCHESS requesting him to try one string alone next time. How he succeeded in that exploit is known to all the world, for he ever afterwards retained an extreme partiality for the fourth string.

In 1808 he obtained from the GRAND DUCHESS leave to travel. His fame had preceded him. Leghorn, where seven years before he had forfeited his famous Stradivarius and won a Guarnerius, received him with open arms, although his appearance was marked by an amusing *contretemps*. He came on to the stage limping, having run a nail into his heel. At all times odd-looking, he, no doubt, looked all the more peculiar under these circumstances, and there was some tittering among the audience. Just as he began, the candles fell out of his desk—more laughter. He went on playing, the first string broke—more laughter. He played the rest of the concerto through on three strings, but the laughter now changed to vociferous applause at this feat. The beggarly elements seemed of little consequence to this magician. One or more strings, it was all the same to him; indeed, it is recorded, that he seldom paused to mend his strings when they broke, which they not unfrequently did. Whether from abstraction or carelessness he would allow them at times to grow quite ragged on the finger board, and his

270. HIS PRODIGIOUS FACILITY.

constant practice of plucking them, guitar-like, with the left hand, as well as harp-like with the fore-finger of the right hand, helped, no doubt, to wear them out rapidly.

271. A NARROW ESCAPE.

At Ferrara both he and his violin met with a different reception. A singer had failed him, and he had induced a *danseuse* who had a pretty voice to come to the rescue. Some graceless fellow in the audience hissed her singing, which caused PAGANINI to take a revenge little suited to the occasion. In his last solo he imitated the cries of various animals, and suddenly advancing to the foot-lights, caused his violin to bray like an ass, with the exclamation, "This is for him who hissed!" Instead of laughter, the pit rose in fury, and would have soon made short work of him and his violin, had he not escaped by a back door. It appears that the country folk round Ferrara called the town's people, whom they hated, "asses," and were in the habit of singing out "hee-haw!" whenever they had to allude to them, hence the angry reception of PAGANINI's musical repartee.

272. HIS APPEARANCE.

We get but fugitive glances of the great artist during this professional tour, but it is too true that at Turin he was attacked with that bowel complaint which ever afterwards haunted him like an evil demon, causing him the most frightful and protracted suffering, and interrupting his career sometimes for months

together. His distrust of doctors, and love of quack medicines, no doubt made matters worse, and from this time his strange appearance grew stranger, his pallor more livid, his gauntness and thinness more spectral and grotesque, whilst greatly, no doubt, in consequence of suffering, his face assumed that look of eagle sharpness, sometimes varied by a sardonic grin, or a look of almost demoniacal fury, which artists have caricatured, and sculptors have tried to tone down. Indeed, he must have been altogether an exceptional being to behold in the flesh. People who knew him say that the figure which used still to be exhibited at Madame Tussaud's, some twenty-five years ago, was a remarkable likeness. He looked like an indifferently dressed skeleton, with a long parchment face, deep dark eyes, full of flame, long lank hair, straggling down over his shoulders. His walk was shambling and awkward, the bones seem to have been badly strung together, he appeared as if he had been fixed up hastily on wires and the wires had got loose. As he stood, he settled himself on one hip, at a gaunt angle, and before he began, the whole business looked so unpromising, that men wondered how he could hold his violin at all, much less play it!

It must have been at his first visit to Florence, before his appearance was familiar, as it afterwards became, to the inhabitants of that city, that we get one of those side-views of the man which are more precious than many dates and drier details.

Slowly recovering from illness, PAGANINI repaired to Florence, probably in May of the year 1809. He must have then lived in almost complete solitude, as he does not appear to have been recognised there before the month of October, when he was officially recalled to his duties by the late Princess, now Grand Duchess, at the Court of Florence.

273. A MEETING.

Those who have wandered in spring-time about the environs of Florence, know the indefinite charm there is in the still and fertile country, without the walls of the city. Outside the gate of the Pitti, on the summit of a steep hill stands Fiesole, bathed in clear air and warm sunshine. How many an invalid has walked up that winding and rugged path, gathering, here and there, a sweet wild-flower, resting from time to time, to drink in the delicious air, until pure health seemed borne back to the feeble frame upon the soft and fragrant breeze.

Alone, on a bright morning, a tall, ungainly figure goes slowly up the hill towards Fiesole. He pauses at times, he looks round abstractedly. He is talking to himself out loud, unconscious of anyone near him—he gesticulates wildly —then breaks out into a loud laugh—but stops suddenly, as he sees coming down the hill a young girl, carrying one of those large baskets full of flowers so commonly seen in the streets of Florence. She is beautiful with the beauty of the Florentine girls; the brown flesh-tints mellowed with reflected light from the white road strewn thick with

marble-dust; under the wide straw hat the free curls flow dark and thick, clustering about her temples, and lowering the forehead. Suddenly the large black eyes, so common amongst the Italian peasants, seemed transfixed with something between wonder and fear, as they fall upon the uncouth figure approaching her. In another moment, conscious of the stranger's intense gaze, she stands motionless, like a bird charmed by a serpent; then she trembles involuntarily, from head to foot. A strange smile steals over the pale and haggard face of PAGANINI — was he, then, conscious of exercising any mesmeric power? At times he seemed so full of some such influence that individuals, as well as crowds, were irresistibly drawn and fascinated by his look.

But the strange smile seemed to unloose the spell, the startled girl passed on, and the solitary artist resumed his walk towards Fiesole.

274. IN THE STORM.

Heavy clouds, riven with spaces of light, were driving before the wind. Over the bridge Delle Grazie, up the hill once more without the gates of Florence, we pass towards a ruined castle. A storm seems imminent, the wind whistles, and howls round the deserted promontory, the bare ruin that has braved the storms of centuries stands up dark against the sky, and seems to exult in the fury of the elements, so much in harmony with its own wild and desolate look. But what

are those low wailings? Is it the wind, or some human being in anguish? The traveller rushes forward—in a cavity of the deep ruin, amongst the tumbled stones, o'ergrown with moss and turf, lies a strange figure—a lonely, haggard man. He listens to the wind, and moans in answer, as though in pain. Is he the magician who has conjured up the tempest, and is the scene before us all unreal? or has the tempest entered into his soul, and filled him with its own sad voice? Indeed, as he lies there—his pale, almost livid face distorted, his wet hair streaming wildly about his shoulders—his uncouth form writhing with each new burst of the hurricane—he looks the very impersonation of the storm itself. But, on being observed, his look becomes fixed—the stranger insensibly recoils, and feels awkwardly the sense of intrusion. If the strange man is in pain he wants no help; thus rashly exposed to the weather, hardly recovered from his grievous malady, he may well be actually suffering, but most likely he is merely possessed for the time by certain emotions impressed upon his sensitive and electric organization by the tempest from without. He is drinking in the elemental forces which, by-and-by, he will give out with a power itself almost as elemental.

Some of us may have walked in the soft moonlight under the long avenue (Cascine) that runs by the brink of the rushing Arno straight out of Florence. We can re-

member how the birds love those trees, and the broken underwood beneath them. When the city sleeps the heart of those woods is alive, even the daylight birds are sometimes aroused by the nightingales, as they answer each other in notes of sweetness long drawn out, and tender raptures that seem to swoon and faint into the still more tender silences of the summer night. But suddenly the birds' song is checked—other strains of incomparable sweetness arise in the wood. The birds are silent, they pause and listen: the notes are like theirs, but more exquisite—they are woven by a higher art into phrases of inspiration beyond even the nightingale's gift. The strange whistler ceases, and the birds resume, timidly, their song; again the unearthly music breaks forth, and mingles with theirs. As we push apart the bushes, we discover the same weird figure that but lately lay moaning in the storm among the ruins upon yonder hill.

275. BY NIGHT.

The person to whom we owe, substantially, the above glimpses, met this extraordinary man again in the streets of Florence a few days later. A merry party of young people, laughing and shouting, pass by towards the Uffizzi—we listen to their ringing voices, occupied with themselves, and, youth-like, caring for nothing at the time but their own gaiety, when suddenly the voices fall, the twanging of the guitar ceases, a curious murmur runs through the merry throng, and

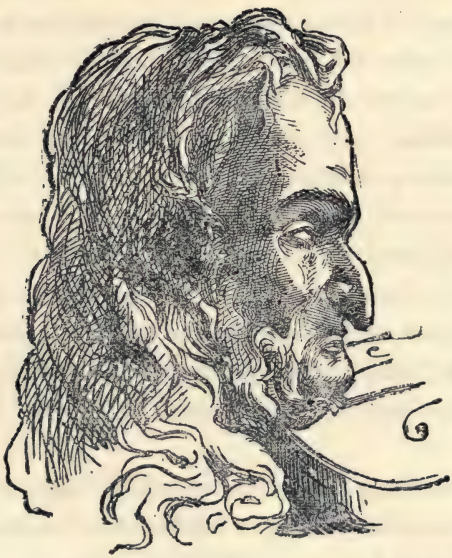
276 ON THE GUITAR.

not a pleasant murmur; a tall, pale man, with eyes on fire, and strange, imperious look, has pushed brusquely in amongst them. He seizes the guitar, and, sweeping its strings with passion, causes it to wail like a zither, then peal out like the strains of a military band, and finally settle into the rich chords and settled cadences of a strong harp. All resistance and murmuring ceases as the astonished party follow him, spell-bound. His cravat flies loose, his coat-tails wave madly to and fro, he gesticulates like a maniac, and the irresistible music streams forth louder, wilder, more magical than ever—he strides, leaps, dances forward with the guitar, which is no longer a guitar, but the very soul of NICOLO PAGANINI. A few days later still the mystery was cleared up. PAGANINI had been officially called to Florence by the Grand Duchess to superintend the Court concerts, and the whole of the town was soon ringing with his name.

277. PERSONAL TRAITS.

About the age of thirty, at which time, as we shall presently narrate, PAGANINI became free never again to be bound by any official appointment—the great violinist had exhausted all the possible resources of his instrument. From this time PAGANINI, incredible as it may appear, seldom, if ever, played, except at concerts and rehearsals, and not always even at rehearsals. If he ever practised, he always used a mute. MR. HARRIS, who for twelve months acted as his secretary, and seldom

left him, *never* saw him take his violin from its case. At the hotels where he stopped the sound of his instrument was never heard. He used to say that he had worked enough, and had earned his right to repose; yet, without an effort, he continued to overcome the superhuman difficulties which he him-



From a Bust by Danton, presented by Professor Ella to Mr. Haweis.

self had created with the same unerring facility, and ever watched by the eager and envious eyes of critics and rivals. In vain! No false intonation, no note out of tune, no failure was ever perceptible. The *Times* critic, reviewing him in London some years before his death, says his octaves

were so true that they sounded like one note, and the most enormous intervals with triple notes, harmonics and guitar effects, seem to have been invariably taken with the same precision. In the words of a critical judge, M. Fétis, "his hand was a geometrical compass, which divided the finger-

From the same Bust.

board with mathematical precision." There is an amusing story told of an Englishman, who followed him from place to place, to hear him play in private, in the hope of discovering his "secret." At last, after many vain attempts. he managed to get lodged in the next room to the great

artist. Looking through the key-hole, he beheld him seated on a sofa, about to take his violin from its case—at last! He raises it to his chin—but the bow?—is left in the case. The left hand merely measures with its enormous wiry fingers a few mechanical intervals, and the instrument is replaced in silence—not even then was a note to be heard!

Yet every detail of rehearsal was an anxiety to him. Although he gave a prodigious number of concerts, he was always unusually restless and abstracted on the morning of the day on which he had to perform. He would be idle for hours on his sofa—or, at least, he seemed to be idle—perhaps the works were then being wound up before going to rehearsal—he would then, before starting, take up his violin, examine it carefully, especially the screws, and, having satisfied himself, replace it in its shabby-worn case without striking a note. Lastly, he would sort and arrange the orchestral parts of his solos, and go off to rehearsal. He was very unpunctual, and on one occasion kept the whole band waiting for an hour, and was at last found sheltering from the rain under a colonnade, rather than take a cab. This was in London. At the rehearsal there was always the most intense eagerness on the part of the band to hear him play, and when he came to one of his prodigious cadenzas, the musicians would rise in their seats, and lean forward to watch every movement, and follow every sound. PAGANINI would then just play a few common-place notes, stop suddenly, and, turning round to the band, wave his

bow, with a malicious smile, and say, "Et cætera, Messieurs!" If anything went wrong he got into a paroxysm of fury; but when things went well he freely showed his satisfaction, and often exclaimed, "Bravissimo sieti tuti virtuosi!" He could be very courteous in his manner, and was not personally unpopular with his fellow-musicians, who stood greatly in awe of him. No one ever saw the principal parts of his solos, as he played by heart, for fear of the music being copied. The rehearsal over, he carried even the orchestral parts away with him. He would then go straight home, take a light meal, throw himself on his bed, and sleep profoundly until his carriage arrived to take him to the concert. His toilet was very simple, and took hardly any time; his coat was buttoned tightly over his chest, and marked the more conspicuously the impossible angles of his figure; his trousers hung loose for trousers of the period; his cravat was tight about his neck. He sweated so profusely over his solos, that he always carried a clean shirt in his violin trunk, and changed his linen once at least during the concert. At concert time he usually seemed in excellent spirits. His first question on arriving was always, "Is there a large audience?" If the room was full he would say, "Excellent people! good, good!" If by any chance the boxes were empty he would say, "Some of the effects will be lost." He kept his audience waiting a long time, and he would sometimes say, "I have played better," or "I have played worse," and

occasionally his first solo would be more effective than his last. After once or twice trying the music of KREUTZER and RODE in public, he decided never to play any but his own, and said to his secretary, MR. HARRIS, "I have my own peculiar style; in accordance with this I regulate my compositions. I had much rather write a piece in which I can trust myself entirely to my own musical impressions." "His art," observes M. FÉTIS, "was an art born with him, the secret of which he has carried to the grave."

278. ART AND LIFE.

Some have pretended that, as PAGANINI never cared to play except in public, his art was nothing to him but a means of making money. It would be, perhaps, nearer the truth to say that his art was so entirely himself, that he did not require, except at seasons, and chiefly for others, to give it outward expression. He needed no more to play than BEETHOVEN needed to hear. Happier than BEETHOVEN, he was not deprived of the power of realising outwardly the art in which he inwardly lived; but probably the creations of his spirit infinitely outstripped the utmost limits even of *his* executive powers, until in his eyes they seemed, after all, the faint and inadequate symbols of his wild and inspired dreams. There are times when the deepest feeling is the most silent—music may come to the aid of words; but there is a point at which music itself is a mere beggarly element. What made PAGANINI so exceptionally great was

the portentous development, the strength and independence of the emotional fountain within. The whole of life was to him nothing but so many successions of psychological heat and cold. Incidents immediately became clothed with a psychic atmosphere—perhaps the life of emotion was never so completely realised in itself, and for itself, as in the soul-isolation of PAGANINI. That life, as far as it could be individually expressed, was uttered forth by his violin. On his concert bills he used to put,—

Paganini fara sentire il suo violino.

What the tempest had told him his violin would proclaim; what the summer night had whispered was stereotyped in his soul, and the midnight song of birds came forth from the Cremona depths at his bidding. Nor was there any phase of passion unknown to him, save, alas! the phase of a pure and lasting love. His wild soul had early consumed itself with unbridled excesses, and although in his maturer years he grew more sober in such matters, it was not before he had fathomed the perilous depths of more than one *grande passion*, and made himself master of all its subtle expressions.

When, then, we are told that he seldom played, we must remember that his inmost life was itself one vast cosmos of imaginary concord and discord—he *was* music, although only at times "the tides of music's golden sea" would burst forth with incomparable splendour, and gather a kind of

concrete existence in sound, yet to him his own inspirations were as real—perhaps more real—without it. For music exists apart from physical vibrations, nor can such vibrations, however subtle and varied, express it wholly as it lives in the creative heart. The ear of the soul hears what no ear of sense can hear, and a music fairer than anything on earth is often sounding in the spirit of the true musical seer. Nay, does he not feel, like BEETHOVEN, the bitter descent when he formulates his thoughts upon paper, strikes the keys, or sets in vibration the strings which after all are but feeble apologies for the ideal beauty, the intense, the subtle, or exalted harmonies of the inner life?

279. ENTER PAGANINI.

Shall we now assist at one of PAGANINI's performances? How many descriptions have been written, and how inadequate! It is hardly possible to do more than describe a few salient peculiarities. But even our pale sketch would be incomplete without such an attempt.

Enter PAGANINI—a shudder of curiosity and excitement runs through the crowded theatre, the men applaud, the women concentrate a double-barrel fire of opera-glasses upon the tall, ungainly figure that shuffles forward from the side scenes to the foot-lights, with such an air of haughtiness, and yet so many mechanical bows. As the applause rises again and again, the apparition stands still, looks round, takes in at a glance the vast assembly. Then,

seizing his violin, he hugs it tightly between his chin and chest, and stands for a few seconds gazing at it in motionless abstraction. The audience is now completely hushed, and all eyes are riveted upon one silent and almost grotesque form. Suddenly PAGANINI raises his bow and dashes it down like a sledge-hammer upon the strings. The opening of the concerto abounds in solo passages, in which he has to be left almost without accompaniment; the orchestra is reserved for the *tuttis* and slight interludes. PAGANINI now revels in his distinctive and astonishing passages, which hold the audience breathless. At one time torrents of chords peal forth, as from some mimic orchestra; harmonic passages are thrown off with the sharpness and sonority of the flute accompanied by the guitar, independent phrases being managed by the left hand plucking the strings, whilst the right is playing legato passages with the bow. The most difficult intervals are spanned with ease—the immense, compass-like fingers glide up and down every part of the key-board, and seem to be in ever so many places at once. Heavy chords are struck indifferently with the point or heel of the bow, as if each inch of the magic wand were equally under control; but just when these prodigious feats of skill are causing the senses to reel with something like a painful strain, a low, measured melody steals forth and penetrates the souls of all present, until some of the audience break out into uncontrollable applause, whilst others are melted to tears, overpowered by the thrilling

accents. Then, attenuated as it were to a thread—but still distinctly audible and resonant—the divine sound would die away; and suddenly a grotesque flash of humour would dart up from a lower sphere and shift the emotional atmosphere, as the great maestro too soon dashes, with the impetuosity of a whirlwind, into the final "rondo" or "moto perpetuo."

PAGANINI was not inexorable about encores — he was always gratified by applause. After the concert the people often waited outside to accompany him to his hotel. He seemed delighted with this kind of homage, and would go out at such seasons and mix freely with them; but he was often quite inaccessible, and bent upon absolute seclusion.

Let us now resume the chronological narrative. Towards the end of 1812, PAGANINI quarrelled with his royal patroness, the GRAND DUCHESS OF TUSCANY. She had given him leave, as above mentioned, to wear at Court the uniform of captain of the body-guard, and one night he appeared in the orchestra attired in this splendid costume. The Duchess seems to have thought this inappropriate, and sent word desiring him to change his uniform for an ordinary dress. The offended artist declined point-blank, and that evening threw up his appointment and left the Florentine Court and all its works for ever. It is not at all improbable that PAGANINI, who could now command any sum of money, had

280. HIS INDEPENDENCE.

grown tired of official duties, which could no longer shed any new lustre upon him, and that, longing to be free, he gladly availed himself of the first ready pretext for flight. In vain his royal mistress sent after him, imploring him to return. PAGANINI was inexorable, and it was even whispered that the Duchess's entreaties were prompted by a feeling still more tender than the love of music—a feeling which PAGANINI had ceased to reciprocate.

PAGANINI was very fond of Milan, and he stayed there during the greater part of 1813. He visited that city three times in five years, staying often for several months, and giving in all thirty-seven concerts, most of them at the Scala.

It was in 1814 that he first made the acquaintance of ROSSINI at Bologna. The great composer, like every other connoisseur, regarded him with admiration and astonishment, and a friendship was then begun which was strengthened when the two celebrities met in 1817 at Rome, and in 1831 at Paris.

PAGANINI AND SPOHR AND LAFONT.

281. PAGANINI treated his fellow-musicians and rivals with simple and unaffected courtesy. He expressed his great admiration of SPOHR's violin-playing, and he went all the way from Genoa to Milan to hear LAFONT. When they met, LAFONT proposed that they should give a concert, in which each should play a solo. "I excused myself," says PAGANINI,

"by saying that such experiments are always impolitic, as the public invariably looked upon them as duels. LAFONT, not seeing it in this light, I was compelled to accept the challenge." Commenting upon the results, he added with singular candour and modesty: "LAFONT probably surpassed me in tone, but the applause which followed my efforts convinced me that I did not suffer by comparison." Although usually anxious, more for the sake of others than for himself, to avoid such contests, he never declined them; and a similar trial of skill took place between him and the Polish violinist, LAPRINSKI, in 1818, at Plaisance, the two artists remaining excellent friends.

282. HIS HEALTH.

At this time PAGANINI's health seems to have been in an unusually critical condition. We have noticed that he seldom consulted doctors, and when he did so he was not in the habit of following their advice; but his credulity was worse than his scepticism. He dosed himself immoderately with some stuff called "Leroy"; he believed that this could cure anything. It usually produced a powerful agitation in his nervous system, and generally ended in upsetting the intestinal functions. Sometimes it seems to have deprived him of the power of speech.

In 1816 he went to Venice, where he seems fairly to

have collapsed after giving a few concerts. However, in the following year (1817) he was much better, and went to Genoa to see his mother, taking Milan *en route*. He has been called avaricious, suspicious of his kind, and devoid of natural affection. He, no doubt, loved money, and had a general distrust of his friends, but it is certain that he was attached to his mother, and took care to supply her with every comfort. She writes to him some years later :—

283. LETTER FROM HIS MOTHER.

I am delighted to find that after your travels to Paris and London, you purpose visiting Genoa expressly to embrace me. My dream has been fulfilled, and that which God promised me has been accomplished —your name is great, and Art, with the help of God, has placed you in a position of independence. We are all well. In the name of all your relations I thank you for the sums of money you have sent. Omit nothing that will render your name immortal. Eschew the vices of great cities, remembering that you have a mother who loves you affectionately. She will never cease her supplications to the All-powerful for your preservation. Embrace your amiable companion for me, and kiss little Achille. Love me as I love you.

Your ever-affectionate mother,

THERESA PAGANINI.

The "amiable companion" seems to have been a cantatrice, ANTONIA BLANCHI DI COMO, with whom he appears to have lived at one time, and who bore him his only son, "the little Achille."

In the same year, 1817, he arrived in Rome in time for the Carnival, where he excited the greatest enthusiasm.

He was frequently to be found at the palace of Count de Kaunitz, the Austrian Ambassador, where he met all the great people in Rome, and among them M. de Metternich, who did his utmost to persuade him to visit Vienna. From this time Paganini determined, sooner or later, to visit the principal cities in Germany and France, but the state of his health was still very precarious. In 1818–19 he gave concerts at Verona, Plaisance, Turin, and Florence, after which he visited Naples for the first time. His advent had been long looked for with feelings of jealous expectation and distrust. The chief professors and musicians of the place, who had never heard him, were not very favourably disposed. They, however, gave him a reception, on which occasion a piece of music was casually placed before him, full of the most ingenious difficulties that could be devised. Paganini was not unaccustomed to this kind of trap, and upon being requested to play it at sight, he merely glanced at it and played it off with the greatest ease.

284. VISIT TO NAPLES.

But he had even worse foes than the professors. He seems to have got into damp apartments close under St. Elmo, and his lungs, at no time very strong, now showed unmistakable signs of consumption. The landlord, fearing that he would die in his house, actually turned him and all he possessed out into

285. INHUMAN TREATMENT. TRAVELS.

the street, where his friend, CIANDELLI, happening to come by at the very nick of time, administered a sound thrashing to the brutal host with a stick, and took the invalid artist to a more comfortable lodging. In 1820 he returned to his favourite city, Milan, where he founded a musical society, conducted several concerts, and received various crowns, medals, and decorations. In December of the same year he returned to Rome, and in the following year, 1821, paid a second visit to Naples, giving concerts at the Fondo and the Theatre Nuovo. At the end of the year he crossed over to Sicily, but the people of Palermo hardly appreciated him; and in 1822 he is again at Venice and Plaisance. From thence he would have gone straight to Germany, in accordance with the proposals of METTERNICH; but on his way to Pavia, in 1823, he was attacked by his old complaint, and for some time it did not seem likely that he would recover. He was advised to go to Genoa for rest, and whilst there he recovered sufficiently to give concerts at the Theatre St. Augustine, when the prophet in his own country for once attracted enthusiastic crowds. The Milanese, who had never expected to see him alive again, gave him an enthusiastic reception at the Scala, on the 12th of June 1824. He seems to have been still unable to tear himself away from Italy, for in the same month he returned to Genoa, then passed to Venice, and in 1825 he was at Trieste. Then he proceeded, for the third time, to Naples, and going over to Palermo, for the second

time, he now met with a most astonishing success. He remained in Sicily for a whole year, and seems in this delicious climate to have recovered his health sufficiently to undertake a long professional tour. He was then detained in Italy for nearly two years more, for in 1826 he visited again Trieste, Venice, and gave five concerts at Rome. In 1827 he was decorated by Pope Leo XII. with the Order of the Golden Spur. He then repaired to Florence, where a disease in one of his legs stopped his progress for several months. It was only in the spring of 1828 that he went on to Milan, where he at length gave his farewell concert, before starting on his long-projected visit to Vienna.

286. TRIUMPHS AT VIENNA.

To dwell upon the reports of his first appearance at Vienna would be only to repeat what has already been said. "The first note that he played on his Guarnerius," writes M. Schilling in the *Lexique Universel de Musique*, "indeed, from his first step into the room, his reputation was decided in Germany. Acted upon, as by an electric spark, a brilliant halo of glory appeared to invest his whole person, he stood before us like a miraculous apparition in the domain of Art!" He gave concerts in the capital of Austria on the 13th, 16th, and 18th of April 1828. The greatest players and musicians from all parts flocked to hear him. Mayseder, Jansa, Slawich, Strebinger, Böhm,

united in extolling the new prodigy. In a very few days Vienna seemed to be turned upside down—no class of people was unmoved by the presence of this extraordinary man. The newspapers were full of verses and articles on PAGANINI. Cravats, coats, gloves, hats, shoes, and even cigar-cases and snuff-boxes—everything was now *à la Paganini.* The fashionable cooks called new dishes by his name; any great stroke at billiards was a *coup à la Paganini.*

He stayed several months at Vienna, but time did not injure his popularity; his talent bore the most critical inspection all round,—he was at once colossal in the breadth and majesty of his effects, and microscopic in the perfection and subtlety of his details. At the acme of his fame he left Vienna, and commenced a tour through Austria, Bohemia, Saxony, Poland, Bavaria, Prussia, and the Rhenish Provinces. Prague was the only city which failed to appreciate him. There was a stupid rivalry, of which we find traces in the days of MOZART, between Vienna and Prague, and it was generally understood that whoever was applauded at Vienna was to be hissed at Prague, and *vice versâ.* But on reaching Berlin the great artist was received with such an ovation, that he is said to have exclaimed, on his first appearance, "Here is my Vienna public!"

From this time to the end of his life, the wildest stories

began to be circulated about him, chiefly in the Italian and French newspapers; but the *Leipzig Gazette du Monde Elégant* cannot be held quite blameless, for it inserted one of the most extravagant of these tales. One man gravely affirmed that PAGANINI's miracles of skill were no longer to be wondered at, because he had seen the devil standing close behind him moving his arms for him. Another eye-witness wrote that he had for some time observed a beautiful woman at PAGANINI's concerts; he went to the theatre in the hope of again seeing her on the occasion of PAGANINI's last performance. The master appeared, played divinely; the house was crammed, but where was the lady? Presently—in one of the soft pauses—a deep sigh was heard, it proceeded from the beautiful lady; tears were streaming down her cheeks, a mysterious person was seated by her side, with whom PAGANINI exchanged a ghastly smile; the lady and her cavalier soon rose; the strange cavalier grasped her hand—she grew deadly pale; they proceed out of the theatre; in a narrow by-path stands a carriage with coal-black steeds—the horses' eyes seem on fire—the two enter, the carriage vanishes—where, apparently, there is no road at all, the inference of all which is that PAGANINI was in league with the devil! It is strange but true that these absurd legends gained some credence amongst the ignorant populace of Italy and France, though they were probably laughed at in Germany.

287. PAGANINI LEGENDS.

But other stories of a different kind annoyed him far more. He was a ruffian who had murdered one mistress, and decamped with another man's wife; he was an escaped convict; he was a political busy-body. He was a spy, a thief, an immoral swindler; he had been in prison, it was said, for years, and had thus learned his skill upon one string, all the others having got broken. It is necessary, even at this time of day, to give a distinct denial to this last legend. PAGANINI'S morals were not above, but they were not below, the average of the somewhat dissolute state of society in which it was his misfortune to have been born and bred. He never committed a murder, or fought a duel, or betrayed a friend, or left without provision those whom he had given just claims upon him. As to politics, he knew nothing and cared nothing for them; and he never read the newspapers except when they contained something about himself. In Paris they pasted up a coarse woodcut of PAGANINI chained in a dungeon about the walls and hoardings of the city. PAGANINI describes himself as having stood before it in mute astonishment, until a crowd gathered round him, and, recognising the likeness, mobbed and hustled him in the most inconvenient manner. It was these reports that he afterwards bitterly complained of, and M. FÉTIS, at his request, drew up a letter, which was afterwards published throughout Europe, in which the aggrieved violinist vindicates his character from the current calumnies. His protestations, however, were far from stilling the

288.
PAGANINI'S MORALS.

rumours, and, when he arrived in London, some years later, there was no absurd and extravagant tale about him that was not eagerly caught up and circulated throughout the length and breadth of the land. A lesser man might have courted this sort of notoriety, but PAGANINI, who could do without it, was intensely annoyed and wounded. We cannot follow the great violinist in detail through his German campaign, in the years 1828-29-30, but some notion of his way of life may draw his personality a little closer to the reader ere we prepare to greet him on our own shores.

PAGANINI'S TEMPERAMENT.

289. Ill health, at times acute suffering, which turned his pale bony face to a green livid hue, an intensely susceptible nervous system, an outward life alternating between scenes of highly-wrought excitement, amazing exertion, and fitful repose—these causes combined to produce a character singular for its mingled abstraction and plasticity. At times he seemed in the body, at other times out of the body—sometimes he appeared to be only semi-conscious of life; at other times more intensely conscious than any dozen people put together. Physical causes acted at times oddly and instantly upon his brain; at others they found him like stone. He was not always open to impressions, which at certain moments would find him so receptive that he became the utter incarnation of them. He was full of contradictions, which he cared little to explain either to himself or to others. He travelled

with the utmost speed from place to place; in the hottest weather he would have all the carriage windows closed. Although latterly his lungs affected his voice, which became thin and feeble, he delighted to talk loudly when rattling over the roads; the noise of the wheels seemed to excite him, and set his brain going. He never entered an inn on the road, but would sit in his carriage until the horses were ready, or walk up and down wrapped in his great cloak, and resent being spoken to. Arrived at his hotel, he would throw all his doors and windows open, and take what he called an air bath; but he never ceased to abuse the climate of Germany, and said that Italy was the only place fit to live in. His luggage was extremely simple—a small napkin might have contained the whole of his wardrobe—a coat, a little linen, and a hat-box—a small carpet bag, a shabby trunk, containing his Guarnerius violin, his jewels, a clean shirt, and his money—that was all. He carried papers of immense value in a red pocket-book, along with concert tickets, letters, and accounts. These last no one but himself could read, as he knew hardly any arithmetic, and calculated, but with great accuracy, on some method of his own. He cared little where he slept, and seldom noticed what he ate or drank. He never complained of the inns—every place seemed much alike to him—out of Italy; he detested them all equally. He seldom noticed scenery, or paid attention to the sights of foreign towns. To himself he was the only

important fact everywhere. He often started without food in the early morning, and remained fasting all day. At night he would take a light supper, and some camomile tea, and sleep soundly until morning. At times he ate ravenously. He remained taciturn for days, and then he would have all his meals sent up to his room; but at some hotels he would dine at the table d'hôte, and join freely in conversation. He lay on his sofa doing nothing the greater part of every day; but when making plans for the publication of his works or the founding of a musical institution, which at one time occupied much of his thoughts, he would stride up and down his room, and talk in a rapid and animated manner. After dinner he habitually sat in his room in total darkness until half-past ten, when he went to bed. Sometimes from sixty to eighty people, eager to see him, would wait upon him at his hotel in the course of the day. When compelled to see visitors, he was polite; but the intrusion of strangers fatigued and annoyed him, and he often refused himself to everyone. He would bolt his door, and not take the least notice of any knocks.

He would sit for hours almost motionless in a kind of trance, and apparently absorbed in deep thought; but he was not always averse to society. He was fond of conversing with a few friends, and entered into whatever games and recreations were going on with much zest; but if anyone mentioned music, he would relapse into a sullen silence,

or go off to some other part of the room. He disliked dining out; but when he accepted he usually ate largely of everything on the table, after which he was generally attacked by his old bowel-complaint. At the time, however, he would eat and drink largely without any inconvenience. Although he mixed freely with the world, like CHOPIN, he was a solitary man, and reserved to the last degree. No one seemed to be in his confidence. He had an excellent memory—yet certain faces seemed to pass from him absolutely. His fidelity to both his parents was not the least remarkable point in his strange character, and although ardently attached to money, he could be generous at the call of what he considered duty, and even lavish when charity was concerned—indeed, he frequently gave concerts for the benefit of the poor, remembering the time when he had been a poor man himself.

290. AT PARIS.

Paris, always eager for novelty, the self-elected critic of the civilised world in all matters appertaining to art, was by this time imperative in her demand to see and hear PAGANINI; so, early in the spring of 1831, he set out for that fashionable capital. Fame had preceded him with every kind of strange rumour —he could not only play on one string, it was said, but his fiddle still gave forth strange music when all the strings were removed. The old calumnies revived. The town was placarded with villainous wood-cuts of him in prison—

others represented him in caricature, playing on one string. In short, expectation was wound up to its highest pitch, when he suddenly arrived, in bad health, and immediately gave a performance at the Opera-House, on March 9th, 1831. The calm and judicious veteran of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Belgium, M. Fétis, who knew him well, and heard him often, and to whose work I am so much indebted for the present sketch, can find no other words to express the sensation which he created on his first appearance at Paris than "universal frenzy." The whole city flocked to hear him, the professors and virtuosi crowded round him on the platform, as near as they dared approach, in order to watch him play, after which they were no wiser than before. At the end of each piece the whole audience, it is said, rose *en masse* to recall him; the tongue of envy forgot to wag, and rivalry was put out of court. It was hoped he might have thrown some light upon certain prodigious violin studies which he had published, and which had long been known at Paris. No one could play them, or even conjecture how some of them were to be played; nor did Paganini reveal the secret, which lay, no doubt, partly in a peculiar way of tuning the instrument, as well as in a length and agility of finger which he alone possessed.

About the middle of May he left Paris for London, and the *Times* newspaper, which, at that time, hardly ever

noticed concerts, devoted half a column in a vain attempt to give some idea of his first performance at the King's Theatre. PAGANINI, to save himself trouble, had agreed, for an enormous sum of money, to let himself to a speculator during his stay in England, who made all arrangements for him and took the proceeds. This plan has since been adopted by several illustrious artists, M. JOACHIM amongst them; and, although it has been stigmatized as wanting in dignity, it is probably, on the whole, the most satisfactory to the artist, though not always to the public. An attempt was made to double the prices at the Opera-House, which raised great indignation: the prices ultimately charged were the usual Opera charges—no more and no less—and this was doubtless thought exorbitant for a concert, although the solo performer was supported by an orchestra and some of the best Opera singers, the famous LABLACHE amongst them. The crowd at the doors on the first night was excessive, and the pit was full to overflowing, but the boxes were thin. PAGANINI was suffering at that time from the inroads of his old complaint, aggravated by the rapid encroachments of his last fatal malady, consumption. He appeared contrary to the advice of his physicians, and was received with the usual tumult of applause. From a heap of contemporary criticism struggling vainly with the difficulty of the subject, we extract a few passages from the pen of an eye-witness, which strike us as unusually graphic.

291. PAGANINI IN LONDON.

Mr. Gardner, of Leicester, writes: "At the hazard of my ribs, I placed myself at the Opera two hours and a half before the concert began. . . . . The concert opened with Beethoven's second symphony, admirably played by the Philharmonic band, after which Lablache sang 'Largo al Factotum,' with much applause, and was encored. A breathless silence, and every eye was watching the action of this extraordinary violinist; and as he glided from the side scenes to the front of the stage, an involuntary cheering burst from every part of the house, many rising from their seats to view the Spectre during the thunder of this unprecedented cheering—his gaunt and extraordinary appearance being more like that of a devotee about to suffer martyrdom than one to delight you with his art. With the tip of his bow he sent off the orchestra in a grand military movement with a force and vivacity as surprising as it was new. At the termination of this introduction he commenced with a soft streaming note of celestial quality, and with three or four whips of his bow elicited points of sound that mounted to the third heaven and as bright as the stars. . . . . He has long legs and arms, and his hands in his playing often assume the attitude of prayer, with the fingers pointed upwards. It was curious to watch the faces of Lindley, Dragonetti, and the other great players, who took up places on the platform to command a good view of him during his performance—they all seem to have agreed that

292. THE CRITICS AT SEA.

the like had never been heard before, and that in addition to his marvellous eccentricities and novel effects, he had transcended the highest level of legitimate art that had ever been reached."

293. PAGANINI'S SPECIALITIES.

It has often been asked in what respects PAGANINI's playing differed from that of other great violinists —in what has he enriched the art—what has he discovered or invented? These questions have been to some extent answered by the painstaking Professor of Music, GUHR, who had many opportunities of watching him closely.

He was peculiar, first, in his manner of tuning. Sometimes the first three strings were tuned half a note higher, the G string being a third lower. Sometimes he tuned his G to B; with a single turn of his peg he would change the pitch of his G string, and never fail in his intonation. These artifices explain, no doubt, many of his extraordinary intervals.

Secondly, in his management of the bow he has had many imitators, though none have approached him in the romantic variety and "fiend-like power with which he ruled over the strings." His ordinary *staccato*, played with a very tight bow, was prodigiously loud and firm, like the strokes of a hammer, whilst his method of dashing the bow on the strings, and letting it leap through an infinity of tiny staccato notes with unerring precision was wholly his own invention.

Thirdly, his *tremolo* use of the left hand exceeded anything which had been attempted up to that time. This effect has been, like every other one of his inimitable effects, driven to death by subsequent violinists.

Fourth, his use of harmonics now universally known to violinists, was then absolutely new—formerly only the open harmonics had been used, and that very charily; but PAGANINI astonished the world by stopping the string with the first finger, and extracting the harmonic simultaneously with the fourth. By sliding up the first finger together with the fourth, he played entire melodies in harmonics, and got, on an average, about three octaves out of each string; his use of double harmonics in rapid passages, and such trifles as four simultaneous A flats, are still problems which few, if any hands but his, have been able to solve.

Lastly, his habit of plucking the strings, sometimes with the right, sometimes with the left hand, and producing those rapid *pizzicato* runs, on an accompaniment of a harp or guitar, was absolutely new; beyond these things it was found impossible much farther to analyse his playing. His secret, if he had any, died with him; his music does not reveal it. Although he wrote quartettes, solos, duetts, and sonatas, fragments of about twenty-four of which are in existence, only nine were found complete; of these the Rondo known as "Clochette," and often played by M. SIVORI, and "Le Streghe," are perhaps the best known.

The celebrated variations on the "Carnival de Venise" do not appear to have been published as he played them, though both ERNST and SIVORI claim to play the Paganini Carnival. M. FÉTIS considers his finest compositions have not been preserved—amongst those he reckons a magnificent concerto played at Paris in 1813, and a grand military sonata for the fourth string only.

The rest of PAGANINI's story is soon told. Broken in health, after an absence of six years, he returned to Italy, where he was now nearly worshipped by his countrymen. He had grown immensely rich, and bought various properties in Tuscany. He played at concerts from time to time, and was always most generous in giving his talents for the benefit of the poor.

294. LOSSES.

MR. DUBOURG, in his valuable work on the violin, asserts that he went to America; but of this I can find no trace in the biography of M. FÉTIS, nor in any other documents which I have as yet come across. In 1835 PAGANINI lived much between Milan and Genoa. The DUCHESS OF PARMA had conferred the order of St. George on him in 1834.

In 1836 he got into bad hands. He lent his great name to the establishment of a Casino in Paris, which failed. He was obliged to go to Paris, and the journey, no doubt, hastened his end. His consumption grew worse, he could not bear the cold; he was annoyed by the un-

scrupulous speculators, who tried to involve him in their own ruin, and then refused to bear the burden with him. They even succeeded in mulcting him in the sum of 50,000 francs, and he was actually detained by legal proceedings until he had paid the whole sum.

But his days of speculation and glory were alike numbered. In 1839 he was a dying man. He struggled with indomitable energy against his deadly foe. He now often took up the guitar, which, in the spring-time of his life, had been so intimately associated with his first romantic attachment. He was a great admirer of BEETHOVEN, and not long before his death he played one of that master's quartettes, his favourite one, with astonishing energy. In extreme weakness, he laboured out to hear a requiem of CHERUBINI for male voices, and soon afterwards, with all his last energies, he insisted upon being conveyed to one of the churches in Marseilles, where he took part in a solemn mass of BEETHOVEN. His voice was now nearly extinct, and his sleep, that greatest of consolations, was broken up by dreadful fits of coughing, his features began to sink, and he appeared to be little more than a living skeleton, so excessive and fearful was his emaciation. Still he did not believe in the approach of death. Day by day he grew more restless, and talked of passing the winter at Nice, and he did live on till the spring.

295. THE NIGHT COMETH.

On the night of May 27, 1840, after a protracted paroxysm, he suddenly became strangely tranquil. He sank into a quiet sleep, and woke refreshed and calm. The air was soft and warm. He desired them to open the windows wide, draw the curtains of his bed, and allow the moon, just rising in the unclouded glory of an Italian sky, to flood his apartment. He sat gazing intently upon it for some minutes, and then again sank drowsily into a fitful sleep. Rousing himself once more, his fine ear caught the sound of the rustling leaves as they were gently stirred by some breath of air outside. In his dying moments this sound of the night wind in the trees seemed to affect him strangely, and the summer nights on the banks of the Arno long ago may have flashed back upon his mind, and called up fading memories. But now the Arno was exchanged for the wide Mediterranean Sea, all ablaze with light. MOZART in his last moments pointed to the score of the Requiem, which lay before him on his bed, and his lips were moving, to indicate the effect of kettledrums in a particular place, as he sank back in a swoon; and it is recorded of PAGANINI that on that fair moonlight night in May, as the last dimness came over his eyes, he stretched out his hand to grasp his faithful friend and companion, his Guarnerius violin, and as he struck its chords once more, and found that it ceased to speak with its old magic power, he himself sank back and expired, like one broken-hearted

296. THE END.

to find that a little feeble, confused noise was all that was now left of those strains that he had created and the world had worshipped.

He left £80,000 to his son, BARON ACHILLE PAGANINI, and about £45 a year to ANTONIA BIANCHI, with whom he had long since quarrelled. He had previously provided for his mother. His violin he left to his native city, Genoa, with directions that no other artist should ever play upon it.

297. OVER THE DEAD.

We have no heart to dwell upon the wretched strife over his dead body. PAGANINI, who had no great opinion of the Catholic religion or the Catholic priests, died without confession and the last sacraments. He was, accordingly, refused burial in consecrated ground by the Bishop of Parma. For a long time his corpse remained at a room in the hospital at Nice. The body then lay for four years at Villa Franca, when, owing, it was affirmed, to the ghostly violin sounds that were heard about the coffin, his son, by paying large sums of money, got permission to bury his father with funeral rites in the village church near what had been his favourite residence, the Villa Gajona. This last tribute was tardily paid to the ashes of the immortal musician in May of 1845.

Fourth Book.

THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.

Fourth Book.

THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.

I.

INTERLUDE

ON THE TITLE OF BOOK IV.

IT is not possible to write upon this subject—the title is out of date. The Wagnerian music of the future has become the music of the present. Such fragments of it as are intended to stand alone or can be dissevered from their dramatic surroundings, are the acknowledged plums in all our concert programmes. Every provincial band aspires to produce them. The operas which draw best at both of the great London houses are WAGNER'S operas; and the London season of 1881,

with the Wagnerian cycle of dramas at one house and *Niebelungen Ring* at the other, succeeded in keeping almost every other opera off the boards. The noisy opponents of a few years ago remind me, with their almost inaudible groans and faint praise of the victor, of the groans of Fafner the dragon or "Wurm," and the unwilling tribute which he is forced to pay just before he expires to the prowess and might of Siegfried.

The evolution of art may be arrested, but, like that of nature, it cannot be stopped. The process is as inexorable as the fall of the leaf or the triumphant burst of spring. Some of us die in the autumn and others perish in the keener air of spring; but art leads forth her ringing choirs into the golden summer land, and the strong and young leap up at her call. Beautiful is the breaking out of fresh thought, fair is the coming of the new age. There is a wind in the trees, the murmur of waters; a fragrance streams from the East, and I seem to hear the morning stars singing together and all the sons of God shouting for joy.

II.

WAGNER.

WAGNER is the most powerful personality that has appeared in the world of music since BEETHOVEN. But indeed he seems to me, in his wide range as poet, dramatist, musician, and philosopher, almost alone in the history of Art.

298. WAGNER AND BEETHOVEN.

BEETHOVEN was a musician only. His glory is to have carried the art of music to its extreme limits of development: no one has yet gone beyond him.

WAGNER said, "I have invented nothing." You cannot invent metre after the Greeks, or the modern drama after SHAKSPERE, or colouring and perspective after the Italians —there is a point at which an art ceases to grow and stands full-blown like a flower.

Most people admit that in music, as in other arts, that point has been reached. What then remained? *This*, according to RICHARD WAGNER: to concentrate into one dazzling focus all the arts, and, having sounded and developed the expressional depth, and determined the peculiar function of each, to combine them at length into one perfect and indivisible whole.

Words seem childishly inadequate to render all at once such a conception as this. Slowly we may master some of its details and allow them to orb into a perfect whole. If you stand at the foot of one of the Alps, you can see but a little portion of it—a hamlet, a sloping patch of vineyard, and a pine copse beyond; but as you ascend the winding path the prospect opens to right and left; cascades leap by to lose themselves in the torrent below—you plunge into the gloom of a forest and emerge on to the higher meadows and pleasant scenes of pastoral life—yonder the soil grows rocky, and tumbled boulders lie around you—the cloud lifts, and a vista of mountains and valleys is suddenly opened up, and pressing forward you leave far below the murmurs of one world, and raise your enraptured eyes to the black eagle, as he wheels aloft in the golden air beyond the stainless and eternal snows.

299. UNITY OF THE ARTS.

So when we are brought face to face with such a varied, complex, and immense intelligence as that of RICHARD WAGNER we are apt to dwell on a part—a peculiarity of the music—a turn of the drama—a melody, a situation, an eccentricity. But the secret lies, after all, in the unity of effect. Close your eyes after a day in the Alps, and, as the visions pass before you, all will grow clear to your inner consciousness, and the varied scenes you have realized only in succession will at last arrange themselves into one great and majestic whole.

"Perhaps he has some talent for music," said the sick man as he heard little RICHARD, then only seven years old, strumming a tune from *Der Freyschutz* on the piano. It was LOUIS GEYER, his step-father; painter, author, and actor, then on his death-bed, thinking of the future, planning as dying men plan, and hitting the mark as they often hit it, quite at random. The child's vivid temperament and eager, sensitive mind had always made him a favourite with the actor and the poet, and he thought of making a painter of RICHARD, but the boy seemed to have no turn for it. His mother, a woman full of life and imagination, was less anxious and more wise. She let him grow, and happily he was left to her, "with no education," as he says, "but life, art, and myself."

300. WAGNER THE BOY.

Indeed any attempt to hasten WAGNER's development, or to fix his career, would doubtless have failed. From the first, the consciousness of his own force has been one of his strangest and strongest peculiarities. At times it seems to have almost intoxicated him—at others it sustained and cheered him in utter loneliness; it has dominated all who have come in personal contact with him, and bent the minds and wills of the rebellious like reeds before the wind.

And the reason is evident. WAGNER was always prodigious in his ability. Like those very fast trotters that flash along the highways of England and America, he has been in the habit of passing everyone on the road, and passing them

easily. But the consciousness of power bred in him a singular wilfulness. At school he could learn anything, but he would learn only as he chose and what he chose. When *his* time came he mastered, with incredible rapidity and accuracy, Greek, Latin, mythology, and ancient history. As for his music-master, he soon sent him to the right-about, telling him he would learn music his own way. Indeed the variety of influences, and the rapidity with which he absorbed them, one after the other, quite unfitted him for going into harness early in any one direction.

At the age of seventeen he had dipped into most literatures, ancient and modern — glanced at science, learnt English in order to read SHAKSPERE, weighed several schools of philosophy, studied and dismissed the contending theologies, absorbed SCHILLER and worshipped GOETHE (then eighty-four years old), turned away from the conventional stage of KOTZEBUE and IFFLAND, tasted politics, and been deeply stirred by the music of BEETHOVEN.

301. EXPRESSION.

There was doubtless a great indistinctness about his aims at this time. To live, to grow, to feel, to be filled with new emotions, and to sound his enormous capacities for receiving impressions and acquiring facts—this had hitherto been enough; but the vexed question was inevitable: to what end?

The artistic temperament could give but one answer to

that—"EXPRESSION!" Creation itself—man—the world, the universe is nothing but that. There is ever this imperious divine necessity for outward expression. This is the lesson of the ages and of the universe—of which we see but a little speck realized upon our tiny and overcrowded planet. But this burning thought turns the mind of man itself into a divine microcosm—he, too, begins to obey in his higher activities what he perceives to be the supreme law of the divine life. He, too, must flash into self-consciousness, and breathe in form, until all that slept in the silence of his heart comes forth swift and radiant with the wind and fire of emotion, and stands at last like an angel, full of wreathed melodies and crowned with stars.

Such to the artist soul is the beloved parable of earth. The life within must become outward; all that we are is dying to be born: is craving to realize itself, to know, to possess, to adore!

It is quite obvious that life is here seized, not from the intellectual, but from the emotional side. The intellect is used to fathom, to formulate, to economize, and represent, in their most impressive forms, the feelings which would otherwise be wasted and mis-spent; but the intellect, which has played so important a part in WAGNER'S system, is always the second, never the first factor, and its function has been to analyze the various expressional media of the past and present, and to create some form or combination more exhaustive and powerful than all the rest.

WAGNER was willing to be led; but he could not help feeling that an artist now is the heir of all the ages, that now for the first time he can stand and gauge the creations of the past in poetry, painting, drama, and music, and ask himself, how far, through these, has the inner world of the mind found utterance. WAGNER had the unconscious but inflexible hardihood to take up each art in turn, weigh it, and find it wanting. Each fell short of the whole reality in some respect. Painting leaves out motion and solidarity, sculpture possesses solidarity without motion, and usually without colour. Poetry without drama appeals to the senses chiefly through the imagination; in itself it has neither sound, colour, nor solidarity. The spoken drama lacks the intensity which it is the unique function of musical sound to give; whilst mere pantomime, whether of dance or drama, lacks the indefinite power of sound as well as the definite suggestion of words; and, lastly, musical sound alone provokes the eternal "why?" which can only be answered by associating the emotion raised with thought, for music alone is without solidarity, colour, or thought, whilst possessing motion and sound in the highest perfection.

302. THE ARTS DEFECTIVE.

It will be said, "Yes, but each art is complete in itself." True, but not complete as a means of expressing thought and feeling. You urge, "But the power of art lies often in its suggestiveness. I read a poem and shut my eyes, and

the vision is more splendid than anything that could be presented outwardly." Yes, indirectly, because you have imagination; the vision was beautiful, but its quality depended on *you*, not on the *art*. Art is for expression, and that art is best which expresses most. Do not confuse the effects of imagination and association with the effects of art. A barrel-organ or a daub may serve to set a-going imagination and memory, but art has to do with expression, and is defective *quâ* art just where it begins to make these demands upon imagination and memory.

303. INDIVIDUALISM OF SHAKSPERE.

Those who have traced WAGNER's career from boyhood know how patiently he has questioned every art, how passionately he has surrendered himself to it, for a time; how willing he would have been to rest, how inexorably experience and feeling have urged him on until, like the hardy navigators of old, he broke at last into a new and undiscovered ocean. At the age of eleven he had read SHAKSPERE. Surely dramatic expression of thought and feeling could go no farther. But he would test it as a form of art by experiment, and see how it worked. He immediately constructed a drama, horrible and thorough—a cross between *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. Forty-two characters suffered death in the first four acts, so that in the fifth, in order to people his stage at all, most of them had to reappear as ghosts. The Shaksperean

method was closely adhered to, and for several years he continued to brood over it lovingly.

Here was a form intensely individual, self-conscious—in which man explored the depths of his own nature. On that rough wooden stage of the Globe Theatre so vivid were the characters, so rapid and complex the feelings, so perfect and expressive the pantomime, that the want of stage-trappings and accessories was hardly felt. Still, it was a restrained expression; it was too mosaic; the individuals lacked an universal element in which to live and move and have their being: we sit fascinated and bewildered with the subtle analysis and changing episodes; but the characters do not run up into universal types, they are too entirely absorbed by their own thoughts and feelings. The contest here is not with Fate and Time, as on the Greek stage, but with Self and Society.

Excited but oppressed by the complex inner life of the Shaksperean drama, WAGNER still felt the need of wedding the personal life to some larger ideal types, and intensifying the emotional element by the introduction of musical sound. Then the cramped wooden stage of the Globe Theatre vanished, and in its place rose the marble amphitheatre, open to the sky, embedded in the southern slope of the Athenian Acropolis. In the classical drama nothing was individual—the whole life of Greece was there, but all was summed up in large

304. THE GREEK THEATRE.

and simple types. The actors speak through fixed masks. All fine inflexion is lost—all change of facial expression sacrificed to massive groupings and stately poses, regulated by the shrill pipe and the meagre harp. But still there is in the dramas of ÆSCHYLUS, EURIPIDES, and SOPHOCLES a breadth of expression which enables the soul to shake itself free from its accidental surroundings and enter into general sympathy with the wider life of humanity. It is this escape into the ideal which the modern self-conscious spirit most needs: this merging of discordant self in the universal harmony which drew WAGNER towards the theatre of the Greeks. There we start from the gods, the ideal representatives of human thought and emotion. Zeus is in Agamemnon, Ares in Achilles, Artemis in Iphigenia, Aphrodite in Phædra; and there is something prophetic and sublime in the spontaneous growth of these types beneath the human touch, until they transcend the gods and conquer Olympus itself. Cassandra is greater than the gods in her consciousness of injustice—Prometheus is sublime in his god-like defiance of fate—Antigone triumphs through voluntary sacrifice—it is the inexorable progress of the human conscience towards a higher Olympus, a purer deity—men come from gods, but excel the gods; then follows the inevitable decline, "the dusk of the gods," and, lastly, the assertion of man's divinity and the rehabilitation through man of the divine idea.

This thought Christianity should eternally present; but

as its votaries unhappily trampled upon one half of human life, and caricatured the other all through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance insisted upon reviving the types of Greek beauty and force, in order to restore the balance and reassert the place and dignity of the down-trodden senses. That protest, in the teeth of our modern religious narrowness, will continue to be popular until the reconciliation between the old and the new world-spirit is reached in a higher, freer life, recognizing and making room for the development in due balance of every part of human nature. The Greek view of life may not be adequate, but it had elements which we want; and to study art we must still go to Athens. Within his limits the Greek remains our supreme standard.

305. THE SOUL OF THE GREEK DRAMA.

For what the Greek was, and for what he saw, his theatre found an almost perfect art-form. The dance or science of pantomimic motion was part of his daily education. His body was trained in the Palæstra, or gymnasium, and his life was one of constant drill to enable him to take part in the games and national festivals. The elastic tongue of HOMER had been enriched and fired by a hundred poets before the full development of the Greek drama, and hymns and songs, set to rhythmic and choral melodies of every character and variety, supplied him with ready emotional utterance upon all occasions. Add to this the profound enthusiasm which still accompanied the ancient rites, the Delphic oracles and the Eleusinian mysteries, and we have all the materials

which were woven into one harmonious whole by ÆSCHYLUS —poet, warrior, stage manager, and religious devotee.

306. GREEK CHORUS.

The soul of the Greek drama, freed from accidental associations, must now be melted down in the new crucible. WAGNER found there an intense earnestness of purpose—the devout portrayal of a few fundamental types—the large clear outline like the frieze of the Parthenon—a simple plot and well-developed phases of feeling as pronounced and trenchant as the rhythmic motions of the *dramatis personæ;* and lastly he found—what he found not in SHAKSPERE—the Greek chorus. This gave its binding intensity to the whole drama—this provided the universal element in which the actors lived and moved and had their being. The chorus ever in motion—a band of youths or maidens, priests or supernatural beings, fluid and expressive, like the emotions of the vast and earnest assembly;—the chorus bore aloft a wail over the agonies of Philoctetes—a plaint for Iphigenia —a questioning of the gods for Cassandra; it enveloped the stage with floods of passionate declamation; it rushed, it pointed, it swayed, it sighed and whispered in broken pathetic accents; it was like the sobbing of the sea on a rocky strand—the sound of the waves in Ionian caves—the wild sweep of the tempest answering back man's passionate plaint, and fitting the simple feelings of the great types on the stage with an almost elemental intensity of expression. The

mysterious variety of Greek metres, the varied spasmodic rhythms, can only be understood when the vision of the Greek chorus rises before us in its eager bursts of appropriate but fitful activity. That changing chant, that harsh ringing progression of notes on the Greek scales of which Gregorians are still the Christian relics—we should not call it music, it was not melody, much less harmony, but it was sound inflexions marvellously used to drill declamation, posture, and pantomime. The soul of it has transmigrated in these latter days—it has become the Wagnerian orchestra.

307. THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE UNIVERSAL.

Turn back now, for a moment, to the Shaksperean drama. Chorus, musical sound, band, song, all the voices of universal nature environing man—appalling, consoling, inspiring him—have vanished. A new inner-world, unknown to the Greeks, has taken their place, and man is absorbed with himself. Yet without that universal voice which he can make his own, how he shrinks, dwarfed by his narrow individuality; no longer a part of the great whole and soul of things; nature no longer his mother, the winds no more his friends, the sea no more his comforter! The ideal atmosphere of the Greek chorus is missed; the power of music, however rudimentary, is absent; SHAKSPERE seems to have felt it; it passes over his sublime creations as an invocation to Music in *Twelfth Night*, or in Ophelia's

plaintive song. And this is the point of contact between the old drama of ÆSCHYLUS and the new drama of SHAKSPERE; the two stand for ever for the opposite poles of dramatic art—the universal type, the individual life—and both are necessary. The individual is naturally evolved from the universal, but once evolved and developed it must be restored to the universal and be glorified by it.

308. UNION OF THE ARTS.

At this crisis, in his quest after a perfect art-form, WAGNER found himself confronted with BEETHOVEN'S music. He did not believe that drama could be carried farther than ÆSCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, and SHAKSPERE, or music any farther than BEETHOVEN; but he did conceive the project of leading the whole stream of the Beethovenian music into the channels of Shaksperean drama. The Greek chorus might have been inadequate to the simple types of Greek tragedy, but modern life, with its self-conscious spirituality, its questions, its doubts, its hopes, and its immense aspirations—this seemed to require quite a new element of expression. The voice of this inner life had been preparing for four hundred years; when it was ready it turned out to be no inflexible mask, through which a human voice might speak, nor even a mobile chorus, but a splendid and complex organ of expression, fitted so closely about the soul of man, as to become the very Æolian harp upon which the breath of his life could freely play.

In the great world-laboratory of Art, Wagner found already all that he required. There was, as he remarked, nothing left for him to invent; the arts of poetry, music, painting, and pantomime had been explored separately and perfected; nay, one step more had been made—the arts had actually been *combined* at different times in different ways. Music with pantomime and poem by the Greeks; music with pantomime, drama, painting, and every conceivable effect of stage scenery and costume, as in modern opera; music and words, as in oratorio or the cantata. But in Greece music was wholly undeveloped as an art; acting had never sounded the depths of individual life and expression. The Shaksperean drama left out music. The cantata and oratorio omitted pantomime and painting; whilst modern opera presented a meretricious and maimed combination of the arts resulting from a radically defective form.

With a surprising vigour of intellect, WAGNER has analysed the situation, and explained exactly why he felt dissatisfied with the best operatic efforts of the past, and why he seeks to supersede opera with the "musical drama."

I think his critical results may be briefly summed up thus:—In the musical drama, poetry, music, scenery, and acting are to be so blended as that each shall have its own appropriate share, and no more, as a medium of expression. The acting must not be cramped by the music, as in common opera, where

309. WAGNER'S THEORY SUMMED UP.

a man has to stand on one toe till he has done his *roulade,* or pauses in the dead of night to shout out a song about "Hush! we shall be discovered!" when there is not a moment to spare. The music must not be spoiled for the acting, as in ballet and pantomime, where acting is overstrained to express what the sister arts of poetry and music are better fitted to convey. And poetry, which after all supplies the definite basis and answers the inevitable "why?" must not be sacrificed, as in our opera *libretti,* to the demands of singers for *aria* and *scena,* whilst the scenery must only attempt effects and situations which can be made to look real. The object of the grand musical drama is, in fact, to present a true picture of human feeling with the utmost fulness and intensity, freed from every conventional expression by the happy union of all the arts, giving to each only what it is able to deal with—but thus dealing with everything, leaving nothing to the imagination. The WAGNERIAN drama completely exhausts the situation.

Filled with this magnificent conception, WAGNER looked out upon the world of modern opera—and what did he see? First, he noticed that the opera had made a false start. It sprang, not from the earnest feeling of the miracle plays, but from the indolent desire of the luxurious Italian nobles to listen to the delicious popular melodies in a refined form. The

310. ITALIAN OPERA ANALYSED.

spontaneous street action (which may to this day be admired in Naples or Florence) was exchanged for a sort of drawing-room stage and poets were hired to re-set the Italian melodies, as MOORE re-set the Irish melodies, for ears polite. This new aristocratic mongrel art had nothing to do with the real drama. METASTASIO himself was only an Italian MR. CHORLEY—the very humble servant of everybody's tunes; but these tunes had to be strung together, so the *recitative*, used for centuries in church, was borrowed; then the product was naturally a little dull, so the whole had to be whipped up with a dance; hence the *ballet*, and there you have the three fixed points of the opera—*aria*, *recitative*, and *ballet*—which to this day determine the form of modern opera. Thus opera, whilst it had no connection with the real drama, did not even spring from the best musical elements. "From the prosperity of opera in Italy," says WAGNER, "the art-student will date the decline of music in that country. . . . . No one who has any conception of the grandeur and ineffable depth of the earlier Italian church music—PALESTRINA's 'Stabat Mater,' for instance—will ever dream of maintaining that Italian opera can be looked upon as the legitimate daughter of that wondrous mother."*

As ear-tickling, and not truth of expression, was the chief thing, and as there was nothing much to be expressed,

* *Music of the Future*: Letter to F Villot, p. 10.

the *arias* got wider and wider of the words, and at last the words became mere pegs, and the music totally irrelevant—as who should dance a jig over a grave.

GLUCK AND THE INCORRIGIBLE OPERA.

311. GLUCK'S reform consisted in making the operatic tunes once more true to the words; but the improvement touched the sentiment only, without reaching the defective form. In France the form was slightly redeemed by the superior *libretti* and more elaborate pantomime; whilst in Germany opera arrived as a finished foreign production, and MOZART and others had to go to Italy to learn it. "In expressing my highest admiration of the exquisite beauty of our great masters," says WAGNER, "I did not detract from their fame in showing that the cause of their weaknesses lay in the faultiness of the *genre*."* And the defect of *genre* lay chiefly in the immolation of the *libretto* to the exigences of fixed *aria, scena,* and *recitative*. The drama, which has to be stretched upon that Procrustean bed, must necessarily become disjointed and lifeless in the process. ROSSINI retarded the progress of the musical drama for at least fifty years through the absolute triumph of melody, in the most fascinating abundance, over the resources of the orchestra and the inspirations of the poet.

"His opera," writes EDWARD DANNREUTHER, to whose

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* Ibid., p. 22.

pamphlet on WAGNER I am so much indebted, "is like a string of beads, each bead being a glittering and intoxicating tune. Dramatic and poetic truth—all that makes a stage performance interesting—is sacrificed to tunes. Poet and musician alike had felt this. GOETHE and SCHILLER both found the operatic form, and even the existing stage, so uncongenial, that they took to writing narrative and descriptive plays not to be acted at all, and have been followed in this by BYRON, TENNYSON, BROWNING, and SWINBURNE. BEETHOVEN wrote but one opera, *Fidelio*, in which the breadth of the overture, or overtures, seems to accuse the narrowness of the dramatic form, although the *libretto* of *Fidelio* is very good, as times go. MENDELSSOHN and SCHUMANN could never find a suitable *libretto*.

312. THE MUSICAL DRAMA.

The conclusion of all this is obvious. The perfect medium which was to combine the apparently unmanageable arts was yet to come, and WAGNER proposed to himself the task of harnessing these fiery steeds to his triumphal car, and driving them all together. He must choose his own subject, with a simple plot and a few strong passions and great situations. He must write his own drama, which, without being either orthodox verse or fixed metre, would aim in its mobile and alliterative pathos at following the varied inflexions of natural feeling. He must arrange his own scenery, perfect in detail, and within the limits of stage possibility; and finally he must

compose his own music and drill his band, chorus, and characters.

To his prophetic vision the old opera form of *aria, scena,* and *recitative* has disappeared. The orchestra in a wondrous fashion floods the soul with an emotion appropriate to the situation. The drama itself advances unshackled by any musical exigency; the music flows on continuously, not imposing a form, but taking its form from the emotion of the sentences as they follow each other. Snatches there are here and there of exquisite melody, broken up by part-singing, with a wild burst of chorus when needful to fulfil the dramatic occasion; but never must action be delayed, never must emotion be belied, never truth sacrificed: only at times, when the expressional power of words ceases, the music will fulfil, deepen, combine, and sometimes lift the drama almost out of itself. Then the spectator is raised into a sphere of ecstatic contemplation; the pageantry passes before his eyes as in a dream, whilst his soul lives and moves only in the ideal sphere of the varied and intense passions which are being played out before him.

313. WAGNER'S MASTERS.

Whilst these perceptions and aims were slowly maturing in him, WAGNER found himself constantly at war with his age and his surroundings. At sixteen, he had resolved to devote himself to music, finding in it the ineffable expression for emotions otherwise mainly inexpressible. Musical notes and intervals were to

him radiant forms and flaming ministers. MOZART taught him that exquisite certainty of touch which selects exactly the right notes to express a given musical idea. WEBER taught him the secret of pure melody, how to stamp with an indelible type a given character, as in the return of the Samiel motive in *Der Freyschutz*; he also perceived in that opera the superiority of legend and popular myth, as on the Greek stage, to present the universal and eternal aspects of human life in their most pronounced and ideal forms. BEETHOVEN supplied him with the mighty orchestra, capable of holding in suspension an immense crowd of emotions, and of manipulating the interior and complex feelings with the instantaneous and infallible power of a magician's wand. SCHUBERT taught him the freedom of song—CHOPIN the magic elasticity of chords—SPOHR the subtle properties of the chromatic scale—and even MEYERBEER revealed to him the possibility of stage effect through the Grand Opera. SHAKSPERE, GOETHE, and SCHILLER suggested the kind of language in which such dramas as *Lohengrin* and *Rheingold* might be written; whilst MADAME SCHRÖDER DEVRIENT revealed to him what a woman might accomplish in the stage presentation of ideal passion with such a part as Elsa in *Lohengrin*, or Brünnhilde in *Walküre*.

But the immediate result of this, as I have said, was not promising. Contrary to the advice of his friends, he had thrown himself, heart and soul, into the study of music as a

profession. Under the Cantor Weinlig, at Leipsic, and whilst at the University, he produced an overture and symphony, which were played, and not unfavourably received, at the Gewandhaus; but his early work, with here and there an exceptional trait in harmony, was nothing but a pale copy of MOZART, as may be seen from a poor little piano sonata lately republished by BREITKOPF.

His health now broke down. He was twenty years old (1833), and he went to his brother, a professor of music at Wurzburg, where he stayed a year, at the end of which time he was appointed musical director at the Magdeburg theatre, where, under the combined influence of WEBER and BEETHOVEN, he produced two operas—*The Fairies*, and *The Novice of Palermo*—neither of which succeeded. He left his place in disgust, and obtained another post at the Königsberg theatre. There he married an actress—a good creature, who, without being much to blame, does not seem to have materially increased his happiness, but who decidedly shared the opinion of his friends that the composition of "pot-boilers" was superior to the pursuit of the Ideal. The Ideal, however, haunted WAGNER, and—Poverty.

314. WAGNER AT TWENTY.

In 1836 he left with MINA for Riga on the shores of the Baltic, and there, as *chef d'orchestre* at the theatre, he

really appears to have enjoyed studying the operas of Mehul, Spontini, Auber; for, whilst suffering what he describes as a dull, gnawing pain at the frequent irrelevance of the sentiment to the music, the nobler correspondences and beautiful inspirations gave him far-off glimpses of that musical drama to which he even now dimly aspired.

315. RIENZI.

In the midst of his routine duties Bulwer's novel, *Rienzi,* struck his imagination. There, as on a large and classic stage, was portrayed that eternal revolt of the human spirit against tyranny, routine, selfishness, and corruption, of which the Polish insurrection of 1831 and the Revolution of July were the modern echoes. Rienzi, a tribune of the people, dreaming of the old austere Republic, in the midst of corrupt Papal Rome—a noble heart, a powerful will at war with a brutal and vulgar age, supported, cheered by the enthusiasm of a devoted and patriotic sister—raised by a wave of popularity to the highest summit of human power, then hurled down by the Papal anathema, betrayed by a mean and cowering aristocracy, banished by the mob that had so lately hailed him as a deliverer, and at last falling by a treacherous hand upon the charred and crumbling ashes of his own homestead, the last great tribune of Rome!—here was a subject with immense outlines, full of situations in which the greatest breadth might be joined to the most detailed inflexions of feeling. In it Wagner, whilst not departing avowedly from the form of

the grand opera then in vogue at Paris, has in fact burst the boundaries. *Rienzi* is already the work of an independent master—it is, at least, prophetic of *Lohengrin* and *Tristan*, whilst comparing favourably in pure melody and sensational effects with any of the current operas. What rush, triumph, aspiration about the large outlines and tramping measures of the overture—what *élan* and rugged dignity in the choruses—what elevation in Rienzi's prayer, "God of Light!"—what fervour and inexhaustible faith in the phrase, "Thou hast placed me as a pilot on a treacherous and rocky strand"—what imagery, as of vast buildings and ranged towers dimly seen athwart the dull red dawn, in the music of "Scatter the night that reigns above this city," and what chastened exaltation, free from all Italian flourish or ornament, of "Rise, thou blessed sun, and bring with thee resplendent liberty!"

But in 1839, which saw the text and the completion of the two first acts, we are far indeed from the production of *Rienzi*; it struck, however, the key-note of a most important and little-understood phase in WAGNER'S career—the political phase.

316. WAGNER MOB ORATOR.

Musicians, poets, and artists are not, as a rule, politicians. Their world is the inner world—the world of emotion and thought, which belongs to no special age or clime, but is eternal and universal. GOETHE and BEETHOVEN cared little for revolutions,

and have even been deemed wanting in patriotism. But WAGNER was a hot politician. He was at one time a mob orator, and was seduced by his illustrious friend RÖCKEL, who was afterwards put in prison, to throw himself at Dresden into the rise of Saxony and the agitations of 1848. He was proscribed and banished from German soil, and years afterwards when he had, if not recanted, at all events acquiesced in things as they were, he was obliged to fly from Munich, warned by the friendly king that his life was in danger. The title of but one of his numerous semi-political pamphlets, *Art and the Revolution*, gives us the real clue to all this. People have accused WAGNER of time-serving and change in politics, but the fact was that he favoured social revolution *because* he thought it needful to art revolution. Conventionality and stagnation in art seemed to him the natural outcome of conventionality and stagnation in society; the world must be recalled to feeling and reality before art could again become the ideal life of the people, as it was once in Greece. But when, through royal patronage later on, all impediment to the free development of his art-work disappeared, his revolutionary tendencies also disappeared. He, too, was, first and foremost, Artist, and he came to realise his vocation, which had to do with Art, and with "the Revolution" only in so far as it affected "Art."

But, in fact, no ardent soul could escape the romantic

and revolutionary contagion that swept over France, Ger-
317. many, and even England, between 1830 and
THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT. 1850. Europe seemed to breathe freely once more after the iron hand of NAPOLEON I. had been lifted from her oppressed bosom—but then, like a wayward child, she burst into all kinds of excesses.

The atheism of the first revolution, the brutality of NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE'S administration, the dulness of LOUIS PHILIPPE'S, the revived taste for Greek art combined with the inflexible dogmatism of the Papal creed—all these conspired to fill the ardent youth of the period with a deep revolt against things as they were. With this came a settled longing for a return of some sort to nature and freedom, and a vague but intense aspiration towards the ideal and immaterial world, which in other times might have taken the form of a religious revolution, but in 1830 broke out in what has been called "Romanticism" in Art. It was seen in the writings of MAZZINI and the mutterings of Italian freedom; in the insatiable and varied developments of MADAME SAND'S genius, in the wild and pathetic cries of ALFRED DE MUSSET, in the sentimentalism of LAMARTINE, in the vast scorn and bitter invective of HUGO, in the heart-broken submission of LACORDAIRE, and in the despair of DE LAMMENAIS. BYRON, SHELLEY, and TENNYSON caught both the most earthly and the most heavenly echoes of the romantic movement in England; whilst its inner life and genius have found, after all, their most subtle

expression in the music of BEETHOVEN, MENDELSSOHN SCHUMANN, BERLIOZ, CHOPIN, WAGNER, LISZT, and RUBINSTEIN.

"It seems, indeed," writes WAGNER, in one of those veins of flashing perception in which he so abounds, "that human sentiment, as if intensified by the pressure of conventional civilization, had sought an outlet for asserting itself according to its own laws of expression. The astounding popularity of music in our time proves the correctness of the supposition that the modern development of this art has met an innate desire of the human spirit."*

318. WAGNER'S LOST MS.

WAGNER had left Magdeburg for Riga, but he soon came to the end of his tether there. A stupid little provincial town was not likely to become then what WAGNER has made Bayreuth since—the stage for turning upside down the art-theories of the civilized world. Pushed by what he calls "despair," without money and without friends, but with that settled faith in himself which has made him independent of both until it has won both, the obscure *chef d'orchestre* resolved to go to Paris and storm the Grand Opera, then at the feet of ROSSINI and that strange, unscrupulous bric-à-brac composer, MEYERBEER! The small vessel in which he sailed was blown about the Baltic for three weeks, put into many desolate coast-nooks, and nearly wrecked. After many hardships, shared with the rough and often starving

* Letter to Villot, p. 30.

crew, the lonely musician arrived in London (1840), with his head full of Paris and the *Grand Opéra,* and with *Rienzi* in his carpet bag.

Whilst here he playfully seized the musical *motive* of the English people. It lay, he said, in the five consecutive ascending notes (after the first three) of "Rule Britannia": there was expressed the whole breadth and downright bluff "go" of the British nation. He threw "Rule Britannia" into an overture, and sent it by post to SIR GEORGE SMART, then omnipotent musical professor in London; but the postage being insufficient, the MS. was not taken in, and at this moment is probably lying in some dim archive of the Post Office, "left till called for."

Crossing to Dieppe, he met the crafty and clever MEYERBEER, who instantly saw the man he had to deal with, and probably conceived in a moment that policy of apparent support but probable intrigue which made him throughout life WAGNER'S pet aversion.

319. WAGNER AND MEYERBEER.

It has been unwarrantably asserted that WAGNER hated the Jews because of MEYERBEER and MENDELSSOHN, and hated MEYERBEER and MENDELSSOHN because they were successful; but WAGNER'S dearest friends have been Jews; he only objected to what he considered the low level of their art theories; and if he hated MEYERBEER and MENDELSSOHN—two men also at loggerheads, by the way—it was not simply

because they had the ear of Europe, but because they and their friends kept everyone else out of the field, whilst MEYERBEER debased musical art to the level of the vulgarest sensation, and MENDELSSOHN never rose in WAGNER'S opinion above the plane of a drawing-room prophet, whilst creating an elegant and pseudo-classic standard of excellence to which everyone soon learned to bow down.

In this opinion I shall never concur. MENDELSSOHN has been to me as much a revelator of the beautiful as WAGNER has been of the sublime. Nothing is more painful to me than the bitter opposition between the friends of MENDELSSOHN and WAGNER. These two great spirits were probably as antipathetic as MOORE and WORDSWOTH; but although WAGNER is *the* inexorable and colossal development in art since BEETHOVEN, MENDELSSOHN reigns for ever in a sweet wayside temple of his own, full of bright dreams and visions, incense and ringing songs. And partly is he so sweet because, unburthened with any sense of a message to utter, a mission to develop, he sings like a child in the valleys of asphodel, weaving bright chaplets of spring flowers for the whole world, looking upon the mystery of grief and pain with wide eyes of sympathy, and at last succumbing to it himself, but not understanding it, with a song of tender surprise upon his lips.

WAGNER passed two terrible years, 1840–42, in Paris. MEYERBEER had given him introductions, and introduced

him later to M. Joly, a stage-director at Paris, whom he must have known to be on the point of bankruptcy, and who suspended the rehearsal of the *Novice of Palermo* at the last moment. But this was but the end of a series of checks. He wrote an overture to *Faust*. His good friend and faithful ally, Schlesinger, editor of the *Gazette Musicale*, got it rehearsed at the Conservatoire. It sounded quite too strange and *bizarre* to those ears polite, and was instantly snuffed out.

320. WAGNER IN PARIS.

He submitted a *libretto*, "Love Forbidden," to a theatrical manager, but it had not a chance, and dropped. Schlesinger now employed him to write, and he wrote articles and novels, and so kept body and soul together. No one would listen to his music, but he was not a bad hack, and was hired for a few francs to arrange Halévy's "Queen of Cyprus" for the piano, and the latest tunes of Donizetti and Bellini for piano and *cornet à piston*.

At night he stole into the Grand Opera, and there, as he tells us, felt quite certain that his own works would one day supersede the popular efforts of Rossini and Meyerbeer. He does not seem to have been dejected like a lesser soul; in what the French called his *immense orgueil*, he was sorry for their want of appreciation, but never dreamed of altering *his* ideas to suit them. "Je me flattais," says the unpaid musical hack, "d'imposer les miennes." Meanwhile the splendid band of the Conservatoire, under Habeneck, consoled him, and on the Boulevards he often met and chatted

with AUBER, for whom he had a sincere respect and admiration. AUBER was at least a conscientious musician of genius, who knew his business, and did not debase what was at no time a very exalted but still a legitimate branch of his art, the *opéra comique;* and, besides, AUBER was a *bon comarade,* and liked WAGNER, probably without understanding him.

After months of drudgery, and chiefly penny-a-lining for the *Gazette Musicale,* WAGNER felt the imperious necessity for a return to his own art. He took a little cottage outside Paris, hired a piano, and shut himself up. He had done for a time, at least, with the mean, frivolous, coarse world of Paris—he did not miss his friends, he did not mind his poverty. He was again on the wild Norwegian coast, beaten about with storms, and listening to the weird tales of mariners, as in broken and abrupt utterances, or with bated breath, they confided to him the legend common in one form or other to sea-faring folk in all parts of the world—the legend of the Flying Dutchman. The tale sprang from the lives and adventures of those daring navigators of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and reflects the desperate struggle with the elements, the insatiable thirst for the discovery of new lands athwart unknown seas; and it seems to embody for ever the avenging vision of men who, resolved to win, had so often dared and lost all. A famous captain, mad to double the Cape of Storms, beaten back again and again,

321. THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, 1841.

at length swears a mighty oath to persevere throughout eternity. The devil takes him at his word. The captain doubles the Cape, but is doomed to roam the seas for ever from pole to pole—as the Wandering Jew to tread the earth—his phantom vessel the terror of all mariners, and the dreadful herald of shipwreck. Here was a legend which needed but one inspired touch of love to make it a grand epitome of sea-faring life, with its hard toils, its forlorn hopes, and its tender and ineffably sweet respites. The accursed doom of the Flying Dutchman can be lifted by human love alone. The captain, driven by an irrepressible longing for rest, may land once in seven years, and if he can find a woman who will promise to be his and remain faithful to him for one term of seven years, his trial will be over—he will be saved.

The legend thus humanized becomes the vehicle for the expression of those intense yet simple feelings and situations which popular myth, according to WAGNER, has the property of condensing into universal types. Immense unhappiness, drawn by magnetic attraction to immense love, tried by heartrending doubt and uncertainty, and crowned with fidelity and triumphant love, the whole embodied in a clear, simple story, summed up in a few situations of terrible strength and inexorable truth,—such is WAGNER's conception of the drama of the *Flying Dutchman* with its "damnation" motive belonging to the captain, and its "salvation" motive given to the bride—its sailor's subject—its pilot's

song—its spinning-wheel home-melody—and its stormy "Ho! e ho!" chorus. The whole drama is shadowed forth in the magic and tempestuous overture, and stands out as this composer's first straightforward desertion of history proper, and adoption of myth as the special medium of the new Musical Drama.

Six weeks of ceaseless labour, which to WAGNER were weeks of spontaneous and joyful production, sufficed to complete the music of the *Flying Dutchman*. The immediate result in Paris was ludicrous. The music was instantly judged to be absurd, and WAGNER was forced to sell the *libretto*, which was handed over to a Frenchman, one M. P. FOUCHÉ, who *could* write music. It appeared, with that gentleman's approved setting, under the title of *Le Vaisseau Fantôme*.

This was enough! No lower depth could well be reached, and WAGNER was preparing to leave Paris to the tender mercies of ROSSINI, MEYERBEER, and M. P. FOUCHÉ, when news reached him from Germany that *Rienzi*, flouted in the capital of taste, had been accepted in Berlin and Dresden!

It was the spring of 1842, and it was also the rapid and wondrous turn of the tide for WAGNER. He hurried to Dresden, to find the rehearsals of *Rienzi* already advanced. The opera was produced with that singular burst of enthusiasm which greets the first appreciation of an important but long-neglected truth,

322. FIRST SUCCESS, RIENZI, 1842.

and WAGNER, having become the favourite of the Crown Prince, was elected Kapellmeister at Dresden, and found himself for the first time famous. Some might now have rested on their laurels, but to WAGNER's imperious development *Rienzi* was already a thing of the past. He had drunk of the crystalline waters of popular myth, and was still thirsty. The *Flying Dutchman* had opened up a new world to him, more real because more exhaustive of human feelings and character than the imperfect types and broken episodes of real history. He seemed to stand where the fresh springs of inspiration welled up from a virgin soil; he listened to the child-like voices of primitive peoples, inspired from the simple heart of Nature, and babbling eternal verities without knowing it. Legend was the rough ore—the plastic element he could seize and remould, as ÆSCHYLUS remoulded Prometheus, or SOPHOCLES Œdipus, adding philosophic analysis and the rich adornments of poetic fancy and artistic form.

The legend of *Tannhäuser* now engrossed him. The drama was soon conceived and written. There he summed up, in a few glowing scenes, the opposition between that burst of free sensuous life at the Renaissance, and the hard, narrow ideal of Papal Christianity. Christ not only crowned with thorns, but turned into stone, is all the answer that Christianity had to give to that stormy impulse which at last poured its

323. TANNHÄUSER, 1845.

long pent-up torrent over Europe. The deep revolt still stares us in the face from the Italian canvases, as we look at the sensuous figures of RAPHAEL or TITIAN—the free types of fair breathing life, surrounded with the hard aureole of the artificial saint, or limned as in mockery, like the dreams of a pagan world upon the walls of the Vatican.

Tannhäuser, a Thuringian knight, taking refuge with Venus, no longer the beneficent Holda, joy of gods and men, but turned by the excesses of the ascetic spirit into a malign witch, and banished to the bowels of the earth in the Venusberg—Tannhäuser, with a touch eternally true to nature, bursting the fetters of an unruly sensual life, and sighing for a healthier activity—Tannhäuser seeing for a moment only, in the pure love of woman, the reconciliation of the senses with the spirit, a reconciliation made for ever impossible by the stupid bigotry of a false form of religion, but which is ultimately sealed and accomplished by love and death in heaven;—this is the human and sublime parable of the drama, wrought out with the fervour of a religious devotee, and epitomized in that prodigious overture wherein the dirge of the Church mingles with the free and impassioned song of the minstrel knight, and clashes wildly with the voluptuous echoes of the fatal Venusberg.

WAGNER'S progress was now checked by that storm of invective which burst out all over the art world of Germany —not on account of *Rienzi,* but in consequence of the

Flying Dutchman, and especially of *Tannhäuser*. The reason is simple. The power of *Rienzi*, the audacity of its sentiment, the simplicity of its outline, and the realism of its *mise en scène*, together with a general respect for the old opera forms, ensured it a hearing which resulted in a legitimate triumph. But in *Tannhäuser* the new path was already struck out, which singers, band, audience, critics, and composers, in a body, refused to tread—in short, *aria*, *recitative*, and *ballet* were dethroned, and suddenly found themselves servants where they had been masters.

In 1843, the *Flying Dutchman* was produced at Dresden, and failed. *Rienzi* was still revived with success. WAGNER now sent the *Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser* to various theatres. The former was tried at Berlin in 1844, and failed. SPOHR had the intelligence to take it up at Cassel, and wrote a friendly and appreciative letter to WAGNER; but the MS. scores were, as a rule, returned by the other theatres, and the new operas seemed to react on the earlier success, for at Hamburgh *Rienzi* failed.

324. FAILURES.

Meanwhile, failure, together with the close sympathy of a few devoted friends, convincing him that he was more right than ever, WAGNER now threw himself into the completion of that work which is perhaps of the whole his most perfect, as it certainly is his

325. LOHENGRIN, 1847.

most popular creation, *Lohengrin*. The superb acting and singing of Mdlles. Titiens, Nilsson, and Albani, will be fresh in the minds of many readers. The choruses in England have never yet been up to the mark, but the band under Sir Michael Costa, at its best, rendered the wondrous prelude to perfection.

The whole of *Lohengrin* is in that prelude. The descent of the Knight of the Swan from the jasper shrines of the sacred palace of Montsalvat, hidden away in a distant forest land—his holy mission to rescue Elsa from her false accusers—his high and chivalric love—his dignified trouble at being urged by her to reveal his name, that insatiable feminine curiosity which wrecks the whole—the darker scenes of treachery by which Elsa is goaded on to press her fatal inquiry—the magnificent climax of the first act—the sense of weird mystery that hangs about the appearance and re-appearance of the swan, and the final departure of the glittering Knight of the Sangraal—allegory of heavenly devotion stooping to lift up human love and dashed with earth's bitterness in the attempt;—to those who understand the pathos, delicacy, and full intensity of the *Lohengrin* prelude, this and more will become as vivid as art and emotion can make it. *Lohengrin* in its elevation, alike in its pain, its sacrifice, and its peace, is the necessary reaction from that wreck of sensual passion and religious despair so vividly grasped in the scenes of the Venusberg, in the pilgrim chant and the wayside crucifix of *Tannhäuser*.

Lohengrin was finished in 1847, but the political events of the next few years brought WAGNER's career in Germany to an abrupt conclusion. His growing dissatisfaction with society coincided, unconsciously no doubt, with the failure of his operas after that first dawn of success. He now devoted himself to criticism and politics. He read SCHOPENHAUER, whose pessimist philosophy did not tend to soothe his perturbed spirit; and during the next ten years, from 1847 to 1857, he spoke to the world from different places of exile in that series of political and æsthetical pamphlets to which I have before alluded.

326. NEGLECT AND EXILE, 1847–57.

In 1855, owing to the earnest advocacy of such friends as M. FERDINAND PRAEGER, who for thirty years, through evil report and good report, had never ceased to support WAGNER, the Philharmonic Society invited him over to London, and whilst here he conducted eight concerts. He was not popular; he was surprised to find that the band thought it unnecessary to rehearse, and the band was surprised that he should require so much rehearsal. But he drove the band in spite of itself, and the band hated him. They said he murdered BEETHOVEN with his *bâton*, because of the freedom and inspiration of his readings. MENDELSSOHN's Scotch symphony had been deliberately crushed—or it was the only thing that went—according to which paper you happened to read. He did not care for the press, and he

327. LONDON, 1855.

was not much surprised that the press did not care for him. The unfailing musical intelligence of the Queen and Prince Albert was the one ray of sunlight in this his second visit to our inhospitable land, but the power of the man could not be hid, even from his enemies; his culture astonished the half-educated musicians by whom he was surrounded, his brilliant originality impressed even his own friends, who saw him struggling through an imperfect acquaintance with French and English to make himself understood. One evening, alone in company with M. SAINTON, HECTOR BERLIOZ, and FERDINAND PRAEGER, WAGNER surprised them all by suddenly launching out on art, music, and philosophy. BERLIOZ was an elegant speaker, accustomed to lead easily, but WAGNER, with his torrent of broken French and his rush of molten ideas, silenced, bewildered, delighted, and astonished them all. BERLIOZ is gone, but that night still lives in the memory of those who were present who survive, and from whose lips I have the incident.

Thus WAGNER passed through England for a second time, leaving behind him a vague impression of power and eccentricity, the first of which the musical press did its best to kill, whilst fanning the second into a devouring flame which swallowed up WAGNER'S reputation. Notwithstanding the exertions of a few devoted believers, twenty-one years flitted by, and little enough was heard of RICHARD WAGNER in this country until, owing to the increasing agitation of a younger school of musicians, foremost among whom we

must name Mr. Edward Dannreuther and Mr. Walter Bache, the *Flying Dutchman* was at last indifferently produced at Covent Garden. I well remember the occasion. Ilma di Murska played Senta admirably well, though too old for the part; and, notwithstanding the efforts of Mr. Santley, the recitative music was nearly unintelligible, owing to want of intelligence on the part of the band. The whole thing was clumsily put on the stage, and Senta's solos and the choruses alone pleased.

In 1874 Her Hans von Bülow, pupil of Liszt and great exponent of Wagner's music, came over, and by his wonderful playing, aided steadily by the periodical Wagnerian and Liszt concerts given by Messrs. Dannreuther and Bache, at which Bülow conducted Wagner's music, brought about the rise of the new Wagner movement in England, which received its development in the interest occasioned by the Bayreuth Festival, and reached its climax in the Wagner Festival actively promoted by Herr Wilhelmj, and undertaken by Messrs. Hodges and Essex, in 1877, at the Albert Hall.

328. VON BÜLOW'S INFLUENCE, 1874.

Mina, Wagner's first wife, was now dead. I cannot here tell at length how Liszt (whose daughter, Cosima von Bülow, became Wagner's second wife in 1870) laboured at Weimar with untiring zeal to produce Wagner's works, and how his efforts were

329. CIPRIANI POTTER ON WAGNER.

at last crowned with success all over Germany in 1849–50. It was a popular triumph. I remember old CIPRIANI POTTER, the friend of BEETHOVEN, saying to me at the time when the English papers teemed with the usual twaddle about WAGNER's music being intelligible only to the few, "It is all very well to talk this stuff here, but in Germany it is the people, the common people, who crowd to the theatre when *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* are given." I have noticed the same at the Covent Garden concerts; it was always the pit and gallery who called for the WAGNER nights, whilst the opera which had the great run with CARL ROSA's English Company was the *Flying Dutchman,* whilst *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* at both houses were invariably the crowded nights.

In 1861 the Parisians showed their taste and *chic* by whistling *Tannhäuser* off the stage.

In 1863 WAGNER appeared at Vienna, Prague, Leipsic, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Pesth, and conducted concerts with brilliant success. In 1864 his constant friend, the Crown Prince, now Ludwig II. of Bavaria, summoned him to Munich, where the new operas of *Tristan* in 1865, and *Meistersinger* in 1868, *Das Rheingold* in 1869, and *Die Walküre* in 1870, were successively given with ever-increasing appreciation and applause.

330. THE TETRALOGIE MEISTER. TRISTAN.

The *Meistersinger*, through which there runs a strongly

comic vein, deals with the contrast between the old stiff forms of minstrelsy by rule and the spontaneous revolt of a free, musical, and poetical genius, and the work forms a humorous and almost Shaksperean *pendant* to the great and solemn minstrelsy which fills the centre of *Tannhäuser*. In WAGNER'S opinion it is the opera most likely to find favour with an English audience, a point since established by the German opera performances under RICHTER.

Tristan and Iseult, in which the drama and analysis of passion—love and death—is wrought up to its highest pitch, was thrown off between the two first and two last great sections of the Tetralogie, and the Tetralogie, itself planned twenty years ago and produced at Bayreuth in 1876, seemed the last most daring and complete manifestation of WAGNER'S dramatic, poetic, and musical genius, until *Parsifal* revealed still greater heights and depths in 1882.

The purpose and power of that great cycle of Scandinavian and German myths, unrolled in the four colossal dramas of *Rheingold, Walküre, Siegfried,* and *Gotterdämmerung,* would carry me far beyond the limits of a biographical chapter. Both the *Ring* and the *Parsifal* I dwell upon at some length in my account of the performances at Bayreuth of 1876, and the memorial performances of 1883.

I will now give a sketch of the general impression that

WAGNER made upon me and upon others with whom he came in contact, and I shall conclude these biographical pages with a notice of his last days in Venice and his funeral at Bayreuth. WAGNER offended a great many people in the course of his life, but then a great many people offended WAGNER. Those who hated him lied about him unscrupulously, but not even his worst enemies ever accused WAGNER of lying about them. He was an egotist in the sense that he believed in himself; but, then, one must remember that in his own estimation for more than forty years, RICHARD WAGNER had been the greatest figure in the musical world, and that it took quite thirty years of his life to convince the world of that fact which now, for about a couple of years, we have had proclaimed by all the newspapers of Europe. If in general company his manner was reserved, and even a little acrid, was there not a cause? Such a man, with an immense consciousness of power, meeting with marvellous neglect, and trampled upon, but never crushed, by penury, misfortune, and the bitterest persecution and ridicule, naturally becomes an egotist, and is apt to play the king in disguise, and behave, even in the midst of insult, as if he expected all men to bow down before him; and then as naturally, when at last they do bow down in the most abject of attitudes, he feels a little inclined to kick them.

331. WAGNER'S EGOTISM.

When I remember that about forty years ago *Rienzi*, and

the *Flying Dutchman*, followed by *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, were finished, that the master—then truly of the future—was patronised here, snubbed there, and supported himself by arranging tunes for the cornet-à-piston and piano—that he starved a little, was banished for his opinions, nearly shipwrecked, and altogether unable to get anybody except FERDINAND PRAEGER, LISZT (perhaps M SAINTON and half-a-dozen *intimes*, some of them as unrecognised as himself) to believe in him at all—why, if there ever was a training for egotism, that was! In fact, for nearly half a century there was no one to believe in RICHARD WAGNER except RICHARD WAGNER. Then, by-and-by, the crowned heads, and, what was more to the point, the heads of opera-houses, came round, and we had bowing and scraping on all sides; and connoisseurs arrived, cap in hand, to interview the great man, and tell him to his face "RICHARD WAGNER, we deem you one of the greatest musicians that ever lived." "Bah!" says WAGNER, "I told you that forty years ago; I can do without you now!" "Oh, fie! what a vain man!" said your offended aristocrat. I never thought RICHARD WAGNER vain. I knew him to be irritable—so are other people, who only resemble him in that. I knew him to be impatient of interruption—so is your banking-clerk when stopped in the middle of a column of figures. I knew him to be proud—so are many who have nothing to be proud of; and from the first moment that I heard, now twenty years ago, the pre-

lude to *Lohengrin,* and read a few of his letters on art, I also knew RICHARD WAGNER to be the greatest composer and the most impressive art-personality then alive in the world.

WAGNER'S was certainly one of the strongest and most independent natures I ever came across. The ordinary motives which move men had no power with him. He cared neither for money nor for rank, nor for the opinions of his contemporaries. He has been charged with a childish love of display, and it is true that from the simplest and most retiring life he would suddenly pass to the most splendid and imposing scale of living; as when on one occasion he entered Heidelberg in a carriage drawn by four horses with outriders. He was fond of beautiful surroundings, and he would dress expensively; but in these peculiarities anyone who understood WAGNER would easily see, that his excitable and artistic temperament found in these contrasts and accessories the stimulus most favourable to his ceaseless and buoyant productivity, rather than the mere freaks of personal vanity.

332. WAS WAGNER VAIN?

Athough the most intimate friend of the KING OF BAVARIA, he was not a man whom princes could order about or control. I remember very well his refusing to exhibit himself to order in the box of a certain high personage at the Albert Hall when he was in England, although he readily availed him-

333. WAGNER AND THE QUEEN.

self of the privilege of visiting Her Majesty at Windsor. WAGNER never forgot that the QUEEN and PRINCE ALBERT recognised his genius on the occasion of his first visit to England, and his illustrious patrons were then in a very small minority.

334. WAGNER AT HOME.

WAGNER was adored by his household. He lived for some time at Lucerne in great retirement—he was then working at the *Ring*. A friend who had at that time frequent access to him, has given us some charming WAGNERIAN side-lights. Nervous and intensely impressionable, we are told his sentiments always ran into extremes, but his self-recovery was rapid. He sometimes wounded even his friends by the intense and passionate sincerity of his language; but he atoned so sweetly for a passing heat of temper, that they loved him only the more. "In WAGNER," said one of his orchestra at Bayreuth, "it is the second movement that is good."

His life in Switzerland was as regular as it was laborious. He rose at six—bathed—then reclined and read till ten—breakfasted—worked uninterruptedly from eleven till two—dined—rested, always with a book in hand—drove from four till six—worked from six till eight—supped, and spent the evening in the midst of his family.

It was in these evenings that WAGNER was most charm-

ing. Every cloud was cleared from his brow; his face seemed radiant with a certain light-hearted good-

335. WAGNER'S GENEROSITY.

ness which diffused a happy atmosphere around him. He had a kind word for everyone, he entered into everything, and his conversation scintillated with brilliancy and humour. His boundless liberality sometimes brought him into pecuniary difficulties; he could never bear to see anyone in want; he had known too much of it himself.

His poor relations took advantage of him. His rustic family connections seemed to rise out of the earth wherever he stood, and claim his assistance or protection. They would come on a visit and forget to leave; they would drop in at meal-time; they would use his name, order things of his tradespeople and forget to pay, travel under his *prestige*, and lodge at his expense.

His heart was larger than his pocket—his generosity far exceeded the discretion of those who traded upon it. A French nobleman, COUNT GOBINEAU, said of him, "HERR WAGNER will never be perfectly happy, for there will always be someone at his elbow whose suffering or distress he will feel bound to share." As a rule the French spoke no good of WAGNER nor WAGNER of the French.

I once spent an evening in Paris at VICTOR HUGO'S house. It was not long after the Franco-Prussian War. The talk

ran on WAGNER. The aged poet at once turned the conversation. Somewhat rashly, perhaps, I ventured to say, "Surely in the great republic of art national or even personal antipathies need not count." VICTOR HUGO cut me very short. "Monsieur," he said, "il a dit beaucoup de mal de mon pays—il a insulté la France. I cannot hear his music."

336. VICTOR HUGO ON WAGNER.

In some things WAGNER was as simple and tender as a child—so true is it that there is a child-like element in most men of genius. His agility was surprising; he was fond of climbing the trees in his garden. On such occasions MADAME WAGNER would say to his friends, "I beseech you do not look at him, or encourage him, he will only run greater risks!"

337. WAGNER'S LIGHT-HEARTEDNESS.

When he was up early, he would go round to the other bed-room doors and wake the sleepers by intoning the "Marseillaise" (he was a shocking red republican, this bosom friend of the King) to the accompaniment of what has been called the "devil's tattoo."

He was very fond of animals, especially dogs; his favourite dog "Mark" is buried not far from his own grave. The *Meistersinger* was arrested for months in consequence of attentions paid to a poor dog he had met wandering sick and masterless. The ungrateful animal bit his hand, and for months

338. KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

WAGNER was unable to hold a pen, but the dog was equally well cared for.

Like LISZT, he was a strong opponent of vivisection, and was fond of quoting FAUST'S saying to scientific doctors: "The very dogs wouldn't live in such a world as yours!"

When not absolutely absorbed in his work, he was most thoughtful for others, and was always planning for their comfort and happiness; and, although quick and at times irritable, he could bear suffering calmly. On one occasion a lady remarked that he had been singularly sweet and amiable all day on a pleasure excursion, at a time when he was in actual physical suffering himself. He confessed at the end that he had felt very unwell, but had tried to hide this from those about him for fear of spoiling their enjoyment.

339. WAGNER'S UNSELFISHNESS.

He was naturally adored by his servants, who stayed with him so long that they became like members of the family. He had an extraordinary power of attracting people to his person. There was something irresistibly magnetic about that brilliant eye, that noble penetrating look, that insatiable and unresting vigour of emotion and intellect.

LISZT, DE BÜLOW, RICHTER, WILHELMJ, and all his staff of artists, were absolutely devoted to him, and gave him

years of willing service which no money could have paid for or secured. The talented painter, PAUL TOUKOWSKI, left his atelier at Naples to come and live at Bayreuth and paint the *Parsifal* scenery; and what scenery it is! What a dream of summer-land is the moor and woodland in the domain of Mont Salvat! What a majestic and gorgeous hall, of more than Eastern magnificence, is that in which the mystery of the Sangrail is enacted! What dim forests, what enchanted caves, what massive walls and battlements, what enchanted bowers, what more than tropical bloom and foliage! It was long before the artist could satisfy WAGNER with that magic garden. The master would have the flowers as large as the girls, and he would have the girls exactly like the flowers. It was difficult; but it is enough to say that WAGNER willed it, and it was done.

340. TOUKOWSKI AND WAGNER.

His influence with the actors was supreme; never would they have attempted for another what they did for him. The Rhine girls were terrified at the cages in which they had to be swung up and down in the Rhine depths, singing all the time. They refused at first to face a situation which appeared more fit for acrobats than for dramatic artists. They would not get into their cages at all, until the master, with tears in his eyes, besought them to try, and then all went easily, and more than well.

341. WAGNER AND THE SINGERS.

Madame Titiens had scruples at first about the Wagnerian parts as unsingable, but in her latter days she was quite "fanatisé" about the part of Ortrud, in which she was superb, and she used to declare that Wagner's rôles gave her the fullest and freest scope for her vocalisation and acting. The singer Schnor, who was identified with the part of Tristram, when he was told on his death-bed of the preparations for the performance of the *Niebelungen Ring* at Bayreuth, exclaimed—it was his last regret—"Then, after all, I shall never sing Siegfried."

I confess I came fully under Wagner's spell—I spent a delightful evening at his house in 1876. It was at the close of the first Bayreuth festival. All the corps dramatic were present—Richter the conductor was chatting with Wilhelmj, the leader of the orchestra, when I went up to him and asked him whether he had recruited his strength well at Nurenberg. There a few nights before I had met him in company with Professor Ella, and in the quiet old city of Albert Dürer—whither he had escaped for a rest between the continued performances of the *Ring*—we had spent an evening over a good bottle of Rhine wine, amid the fumes of those detestable black cheroots which Liszt was so fond of.

342. AN EVENING AT WAGNER'S HOUSE.

Then I caught sight of Walter Bache, who introduced me to Liszt; and presently Richter took me up and presented me to Wagner.

His face beamed with kindness and geniality; he spoke French, said he had been in England long long ago, and would perhaps come again. He had great doubts whether the English were sufficiently serious in art ever to appreciate his *Ring*, and seemed pleased when I told him of the great popularity of his music at the Promenade Concerts, and the increasing appreciation of *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser*. "Earlier works," he said, shrugging his shoulders.

And MATERNA, the unique Brünnhilde, was there. WAGNER had taken endless trouble in forming her for the *Niebelungen Ring* and the great part she was to play; and master and pupil always entertained the liveliest admiration and affection for each other, which sometimes took an amusing and demonstrative form. That night, when Brünnhilde, an immense woman, arrived *en grande toilette*, and wearing some of her best jewels, she bore directly down upon WAGNER—a spare, short, fragile little man. Her enormous bulk seemed to extinguish him for a moment. On reaching him with difficulty in the midst of the glittering crowd she embraced him rapturously—German fashion—with "Ach, HERR WAGNER!"

WAGNER stood it like a man; but towards the close of the evening I beheld the MATERNA bearing down upon him again, and as she neared him he held up both his hands energetically repelling a second attack, "Nein, nein, Frau MATERNA, das will ich gar nicht," and poor Brünnhilde had to put up with a hand-shake instead.

I saw him again in England—it was on that very evening he declined to go with me to be presented to a Royal Princess at the house of a well-known nobleman. If I have cause to regret that circumstance I have also cause to remember that evening with some satisfaction—not only did I hear him read one act of his *Parsifal,* but I received from him a singular token of personal regard. I remember LISZT telling me with some pride how he had received the celebrated "Kiss of BEETHOVEN"—BEETHOVEN was not in the habit, it seems, of embracing people. I now recall with a feeling of singular satisfaction the occasion on which WAGNER favoured me in the same way, with a kiss.

He advanced towards me as I suddenly entered the room with "Ach mein lieber HERR HAWEIS, was haben Sie den über mich schön geschrieben!" and so saying, taking me by both elbows, he saluted me on both cheeks in the orthodox manner.

343. WAGNER'S THEATRE.

WAGNER'S friendship with the KING OF BAVARIA had no doubt contributed largely to the realization of all his plans during his own life-time. The notion of building a special theatre where the orchestra should be out of sight—the seats arranged tier above tier, with a single row of boxes and a gallery above them—had been long in his mind.

The King was anxious for the theatre to be in Munich; but the opposition of the Court, on account of WAGNER'S

political opinions, was then too great. Later on the hotel-keepers offered to build a theatre there on their own account, and to carry out WAGNER's plans free of charge as a speculation.

WAGNER declined. He chose Bayreuth. He was beholden to none save the King and his own followers. They had stood by him, rehearsed his fame, produced his works, and they built his theatre; but every detail was directed by WAGNER, and the perfection which the Bayreuth performances have at last reached is due to the same exhaustive and unremitting personal care.

344. WAGNER'S CONDUCTING.

It was only natural that the master should yield the bâton to a friend like RICHTER, whose experience, physique, and consummate talent would enable him to perfect the executive part of the work; but it was my privilege in England to see WAGNER himself conduct some of his own music at the Albert Hall. Some said he had already lost nerve as a conductor, and, indeed, had never possessed the requisite patience. That may have been to some extent true, but it did not strike me. I went home and wrote the following note, which I see no reason to alter now:

"WAGNER's notion is evidently not to rave, but to command, and to deal with his men as one who gives them credit for knowing their own business, instead of treating them like a set of raw recruits, who have to be bullied,

shouted at, sworn to, and licked into shape from end to end. The most intense power, concentration, and active energy is often the most silent. Look at the silent, irresistible weight of the fly-wheel that drives the machinery of a large manufactory, or the noiseless swing of the steam hammer, or the intense, but silent, and apparently motionless vigour of the poised eagle, or the rapt calmness of a MOLTKE, who watches from the hill-side every evolution of the troops inspired by him. Only occasionally does he raise his telescope, pointing his hand, or sending out scouts and subalterns; and in proportion as all goes well, is fitly inspired, is the embodiment of his will—is he calm. So the "listless" WAGNER sits and orders his band, and they know his mind and obey his look, and heed his smallest gesture, often even quite unperceived by the audience; and this worries the critics. With the best intentions they can't make it out, who are used to their hop, skip, and a jump, and their one, two, three and away conductors! Doubtless, but the old man wins."

A French critic has since written: "WAGNER plays on the orchestra as though it were a gigantic fiddle, with a firmness of touch which never fails him, and sovereign authority before which all are happy in bowing down. To have an idea of so extraordinary a conductor, one must have seen him." I do not therefore imply that WAGNER in his last years was fitted to go through the kind of drudgery which RICHTER willingly under-

took, and which culminated in the triumph of 1876 at Bayreuth.

The close of WAGNER's life was crowned by the two great Olympian-like festivals in 1876 and 1882. The Memorial

345. THE FESTIVALS OF 1876–82.

Festival in 1883 was his requiem; whilst the whole of the city was resounding with his name and fame, the great master's body lay at rest in a funereal bower adjoining the Neue Schloss. The event of 1876 was, I suppose, unprecedented in the annals of Modern Art. I have devoted to it a separate notice. It was my privilege to witness the first unfolding of those four colossal musical dramas of the *Nibelung's Ring* on the Bayreuth stage. People had assembled from all parts of the civilised world; kings, princes, and nobles mingled in that motley throng. The dramas lasted every day from four till ten, with intervals of an hour between the acts. The whole population lived only in the life of that great cycle of tragedies in which gods, demi-gods, and mortals acted out, with more than earthly intensity, the perennially interesting dramas of human life and passion.

346. THE WAGNER MANIA IN LONDON.

It was between the Festival of 1876 at Bayreuth, and the performance of *Parsifal* in 1882, that WAGNER came to England to assist at the presentation of the *Ring* music at the Albert Hall. He was shaken in health, and exceedingly indisposed to take any

exertion not directly bearing upon his work—which was the new *Parsifal* drama. He was not satisfied with his reception at the Albert Hall. He was much courted in society, but avoided anything like public receptions, and was considered over-retiring and reticent by casual observers.

The WAGNER *furor* being now on the increase after his departure, the two principal London theatres were opened in the spring and summer of 1880—Covent Garden for the performance of the *Nibelung's Ring*, and Drury Lane for the presentation of all his other operas *seriatim*. Neither proved a commercial success, the market being thus quite over-stocked. But the WAGNER excitement was still on the increase, and when the *Parsifal* came to be produced at Bayreuth in 1882, Bayreuth was as thronged as in 1876. I was not present at that festival, but I have given a special account of the Memorial performance which I attended in the following year.

WAGNER died suddenly on the 13th of February 1883, at Venice, whither he had come to recruit after the *Parsifal* performances in 1882, and to prepare for their renewal in the following year. He was cut off in the full vigour of his productive genius. Time had not dimmed his eye, nor shaken his hand, nor closed a single channel of thought or emotion. He sank thus suddenly in the spring of the year 1883, not without some warning, yet enjoying life up to its latest hour. "I

347
TO VENICE.

will bear no longer the grey clouds and wintry skies of Bayreuth," he had said to his friends in the autumn of 1882.

A suite of apartments in the Palace Vendramin at Venice had been secured for him, and his children—DANIEL, EVA, ISOLDE, and SIEGFRIED (now twelve years old) were already there. Venice was in the greatest excitement on his arrival. Italy had been in the strangest way won over to WAGNER at Bologna, under the able and enthusiastic bâton of a lamented Maestro; indeed, LISZT told me he had never heard WAGNER's operas more effectively given, except at Bayreuth.

348. HIS TEMPERAMENTAL VIGOUR.

It was WAGNER's desire to be left quiet at Venice, and his wishes were sedulously respected; but he was never inaccessible, and he was often to be found in the Café, surrounded by a group of friends. The first remark of the Venetians who saw that spare, vivid figure, with flashing eye, and who heard the master's eager eloquent conversation, full of wit and geniality, was, "Why, he is not an old man at all!" It is true, there is something of the eternal child—an *afflatus* of divine youth —about all great genius.

349. HIS MORNING.

WAGNER rose in Italy at Venice between five and six, and worked till ten. In Venice he wrote his last art criticisms; and whilst the Italian newspapers affirmed that he was already at work upon a drama connected with Buddha and the great

Aryan legends, the German prints declared that he had turned his attention towards Greece, and was going to Athens to try and recover on the spot something connected with the ancient Greek music. At the same time he was indefatigable in his efforts to prepare for the repetitions of *Parsifal* in 1883, at which he intended to be present and which were carried out at Bayreuth with such magnificent success—July 1883—in sad memory of his death.

He was already suffering from heart-disease, and sat usually—the weather being chilly—in his fur coat. A glass of wine was always at hand, and when he suffered pain he would sip cognac.

His rooms, however, before breakfast were sacred, and his wife COSIMA scrupulously respected them; but at ten o'clock she went in to bring him his letters, and after a short private chat the family breakfasted together. WAGNER would then take his hat and go down the marble steps looking out upon the canal, and ask his gondolier about the weather. If too cold to venture out he would stroll forth, often with his wife, and go into LAVENNA's, the pastrycook's, and buy bon-bons for the children.

350. HIS AFTERNOON.

Between four and six o'clock he might often be seen in the arcades and streets, with all the family, buying little presents for friends, or sipping coffee or the good fresh beer beloved of all true Germans. The military band which played occasionally in

the great square had produced a version of the *Lohengrin* overture in his honour, but played it in such fashion that poor WAGNER was constrained to take refuge in the pastrycook's shop and stop his ears with both hands.

On another occasion, however, he went up to the bandmaster, in his great coat and slouched hat, and asked him to play something out of ROSSINI's *Gazza Ladra*. The conductor, not recognising WAGNER, answered civilly that he had none of the music there, and otherwise could not well derange the programme. On WAGNER retiring a musician told the bandmaster who the stranger was. Filled with confusion and regret, the worthy man instantly sent for copies of the *Gazza Ladra* selection, and played it for two consecutive days. WAGNER was much pleased, and, again going up to the band, expressed his thanks, and praised especially the solo cornet, who had much distinguished himself.

The master dined early in the afternoon, and usually took a short nap afterwards, the faithful BETTY BURKEL, a confidential family servant, always being at hand in the next room, knitting quietly.

At half-past three the gondolier was usually in attendance, and in fine weather the Lido, the public gardens, the San Lazzaro, and Giudecca were visited.

In the milder autumn days of 1882, WAGNER, whose

breathing was occasionally oppressed, seemed to inhale new
351. health and vigour out upon the wide lagunes.
WAGNER AND BYRON LOVE LIGHT. "Ah!" he would say, drawing a long breath; "no smoke, no dust!" At night his sitting-rooms were a blaze of light with quantities of wax-candles. People used to look up at BYRON's quarters when he was in Venice, and wonder what festival could be going on. The waters of the Grand Canal were all aglow, but it was only BYRON, alone with the MSS. of *Manfred*, *Parisina*, and *Don Juan*. WAGNER's old porter happened to be brother to BYRON's old servant, FIDO. "There is something like BYRON about this great German," he remarked. "What is that?" they asked. "Why, he has the same marvellous need of wax candles!" "Where light is there is joy," WAGNER used to say, quoting the Italian proverb.

As the evenings drew in, WAGNER used to read aloud to his family—usually from some dramatic author. He sometimes got so excited that the good people in the house knocked at the door to know if anything ailed the master?

When absorbed in thought, he was in the habit of pacing up and down the room, with his hands behind him. He even had pockets made at the back of his coat. DR. KEPPLER said this position of the arms allowed him to breathe more freely, and eased the diseased action of the heart.

On November 19, 1882, LISZT came to see him at Venice. The two old men embraced each other affectionately on

the marble stairs. They sat long hours together in deep and friendly converse. JOUKOVSKI, the artist, who had painted the *Parsifal* scenery, and for whom the genius of WAGNER had an irresistible attraction, was also there. He painted a remarkable portrait of LISZT, and a "Sacred Family" of JESUS, JOSEPH, and MARY. The guardian angels in the air above were all portraits of WAGNER's children.

352. LISZT'S VISIT TO WAGNER.

LISZT was usually up at four o'clock, and both WAGNER and LISZT got through a great deal of serious work in those small hours.

WAGNER's personal popularity at Venice was extraordinary. In a short time he and every member of his family were known even to the children of the poor. The master was open-handed and sympathetic to all. He seemed ever about—now with his wife, or with little EVA, his pet daughter, or SIEGFRIED. He mixed with the people, chatted and joked, and was ever ready to relieve the poor. He was worshipped by his gondoliers. "He patted me on the back," said one, "asked me if I was tired, and said '*Amico mio,* so the Carnival has come to an end.'" The man repeated the incident everywhere, as if it had been the great event of his life. "They say he is greater than a king; isn't it so?" (*Egli e piu di un re, discono non e' vero?*) was the common talk in the streets as he passed.

353. WAGNER BELOVED BY THE PEOPLE.

On December 23, 1882, WAGNER conducted his earliest symphony at the request of a small circle of friends in celebration of MADAME WAGNER'S birthday. On taking the bâton he turned to the musicians and said :—

354. STRANGE PRESENTIMENT.

"This is the last time I shall ever conduct."

"Why?" they asked.

"Because I shall soon die."

This was not at all his usual mood; he spoke sometimes of living till ninety—he said that he could hardly finish the work he had in his mind even then. His doctor knew that his heart-disease must one day carry him off, but hoped the end might be delayed for five or six years at least. He was very sanguine himself, but not over-prudent. He took too much tea and coffee and stimulant; he was deaf to all warnings, and joked on the doctors forbidding their patients to indulge in these things without setting them a good example. But there were moments when his words, spoken lightly, were unconsciously prophetic of the coming end. He had taken the utmost delight in the Carnival of 1883 at Venice, and on the first day of Lent said to his gondolier, "And where is it the fashion to go to-day?" "To the new necropolis, my gracious master," replied the man. Arrived at the necropolis, WAGNER alighted and walked all over the place admiring the quiet and reposeful niches and the tastefully laid-out lawns and shrubberies.

"And was my worshipful sir pleased?" asked the gondolier.

"Yes, uncommonly," replied WAGNER; "and I shall soon find some such quiet spot for my own last resting-place."

Indeed, there were mornings when he would go out and return breathless in ten minutes. Once at his banker's, and again at the pastrycook's, he was seized with faintness and put into his gondola. He urgently begged that his family might not be told of this. They had their own misgivings. When alone he had been overheard groaning, and was found sometimes with his hand pressed to his heart; but he would rally and make light of it, and soon seemed quite well again; indeed, on the 12th (he died on the 13th) he said he felt better than he had done for weeks—the breathing was freer and the pulse regular.

355. THE APPROACH OF DEATH.

February 13th came black with clouds. The rain poured in torrents. WAGNER rose as usual, and announced his wish not to be disturbed till dinner-time, two o'clock. He had much to do—much to finish—overmuch indeed, and the time was short.

The master did not feel quite well, and COSIMA, his wife, bade BETTY, the servant, take her work and not leave the ante-room in case her master should call or ring.

The faithful creature seemed to have some presentiment that all was not right. She listened hour after hour—heard the master striding up and down as was his wont.

Wife COSIMA came in from time to time. "The master works ever," said BETTY, "and has not called for anything —now he walks to and fro."

At one o'clock WAGNER rang his bell and asked: "Is the gondola ordered at four o'clock? Good; then I will take a plate of soup up here, for I don't feel very well."

There was nothing unusual about this, for when absorbed in work he would often thus have his light luncheon alone.

The servant brought in a plate of soup and retired. All seemed quiet for some time. Then suddenly a hurried pacing up and down the room was heard. The footsteps ceased—a sharp cough, checked. BETTY threw down her work, walked on tip-toe to the door, and listened with all her ears. She heard one deep groan; she stood for a moment divided between a resolve to call COSIMA or break through her master's orders and go into his room at once. The suspense was soon over. "BETTY!" It was WAGNER'S voice, very faint. BETTY rushed in. WAGNER was leaning back on his sofa, his fur coat was half off, his feet rested on a foot-stool. His face was fearfully changed—his features cadaverous and drawn down with pain evidently; with the utmost difficulty he contrived to murmur, but almost inaudibly, "Call my wife and the doctor." He never spoke again.

356. DEATH.

The terrified BETTY rushed off to tell wife COSIMA. The

instant she saw him she cried, "To the doctor, BETTY!" DR. KEPPLER was sent for three times; at last he was found just finishing an operation. Meanwhile MADAME WAGNER had sat down by her husband. He immediately laid his head on her shoulder, groaning, but speechless; and she placed her arms about him, and with one hand rubbed his heart, an act which had sometimes eased him when in pain. His breathing grew softer and lighter, and presently he seemed to subside into a quiet, motionless sleep. She thought it a good sign.

About half an hour afterwards the doctor came. One glance was enough. He found MADAME WAGNER still holding her husband in both her arms, with his head resting on her shoulder. "He sleeps," she said—and the good doctor, suppressing his emotion with a great effort, did not tell her that it was the sleep of death, and that now for a long time she had been embracing a corpse.

DR. KEPPLER, after feeling for the pulse that was never to beat again, gently took the body of WAGNER in both his arms and carried it to his bed. It could not be called his death-bed, for WAGNER died as he had lived, working—the table before him was strewn with books and MSS., with the ink scarcely dry upon the last page.

DR. KEPPLER then turned to COSIMA and said, with irrepressible emotion, "He is dead!" The poor wife, who had been so absolutely one in body, soul, and mind with her husband, fell prostrate with a great cry upon his lifeless

body, nor for some time could any persuasion induce her to leave the corpse which she continued to embrace.

But over the intense sorrow of this true-hearted and affectionate German family I will draw the veil. The servants all seemed to lose their heads. A vast crowd had by this time assembled outside the palace "Vendramin." The bulletin had flown through Venice "RICHARD WAGNER is very ill—the doctor is at his bed-side." No more than this was known in the town at half-past four. At half-past five DR. KEPPLER came down the steps and was greeted with shouts of "The doctor! the doctor!" In the dead silence which followed, DR. KEPPLER, uncovering his head, said, "RICHARD WAGNER is dead. He died an hour ago from the effects of heart disease."

357. RECEPTION OF THE NEWS.

No sooner had DR. KEPPLER pronounced the words "RICHARD WAGNER is dead!" from the steps of the "Vendramin Palace," than the vast throng assembled outside to hear the news dispersed with cries of "Dead! dead!" and in a short time there was not a café in Venice without the bulletin "*Riccardo Wagner, il famoso tedesco, il gran Maestro del Vendramin, è morto.*" It was commonly said that since GARIBALDI'S death no such sensation had been felt in Venice.

The gondolier, who had been ordered by WAGNER at

four o'clock, had been in attendance ever since. Poor

358. THE GONDOLIER'S TRIBUTE.

Luigi heard the news in speechless astonishment and grief; at last, breaking out in sobs, he exclaimed, "Ah! to think that only yesterday I rowed him in this gondola—the good, noble, great man, who never said an unkind word to any of us, although he was so ill! Here, here is his name"; and he held up his ivory-handled walking-stick with the initials "R. W." "And now he must needs die—*Per Bacco!* Poor dear man! how many people in this world could have been better spared!" Luigi also took care of a little kitten which had become a pet of Wagner's, having been rescued by him from an untimely end in the canal. "See," he would say, "even this kitten he saved from drowning two months ago knows what it has lost. It will hardly move; it lies always here in the gondola, just behind where the master used to sit."

Ill news in these days of telegraphy flies indeed apace. The wires were blocked. In the course of the week no

359. FUNERAL HONOURS.

less than five thousand despatches of condolence reached Venice, addressed to the Wagner family, from all parts of the civilised world.

Soon after death Wagner's body was embalmed by his devoted medical attendant, Dr. Keppler, and a cast of his face was taken by Signor Benvenuto.

The bronze coffin, which arrived from Vienna, was carried

upstairs by Hans Richter, the painter Joukovsky, Dr. Keppler, Passini, and Ruben; and the dead master was borne to his funereal gondola by the same devoted friends. The general expressions of sympathy were confined to no class.

The Italian Government had offered the family a public ceremony, which was declined; yet I know not what greater honour could have been paid him than the spontaneous grief of all Venice. The high municipal officers, the chief nobles, and an immense throng accompanied the gondola to the station. The canals were crowded with gondolas draped in crape.

In all the ports through which the coffin passed the flags floated half-mast high. At every town where there was a stoppage the municipalities sent deputations, and the coffin was strewn with fresh flowers.

At the head of the bier there was one enormous wreath, sent by the King of Bavaria, Wagner's close friend, and at Munich the King sent his representative to accompany the funeral *cortège* to Bayreuth.

I will not dwell further upon the honours paid by the way, the processions of musical societies, the numberless wreaths, which by the time the coffin reached Bayreuth amounted to fourteen hundred and filled two large cars.

On the 17th the bier was received at the station by the

inhabitants of Bayreuth *en masse*. It was a solemn moment when the widow and her children stepped out of their carriage, and all the people silently uncovered their heads.

360. ARRIVAL OF THE COFFIN AT BAYREUTH.

A brigade of firemen moved in front of the hearse, which was drawn by four black horses. All the gas lamps were lighted along the road, and black pennons streamed from tall poles to right and left. Midway a fresh wreath arrived from the king with a large inscription, "*To the Deathless One*," and at the same time the burgomaster laid another one on the coffin in the name of the city of Bayreuth.

Arrived at WAGNER's house, "Vahnfried"—only a select company were admitted to the garden—the coffin rested for a space at the entrance, but was not taken into the house.

It was MADAME WAGNER's express wish that no speeches or prayers should be made at the grave—which had long since been dug, by WAGNER's orders, in a retired spot of his own garden, surrounded by thick bushes and fir-trees. A simple blessing in the name of the Church was to be given, and the coffin then lowered in silence.

An immense slab of grey polished granite rested above it, and the vault door was to be opened on one side. Hither was the body now brought by a silent and sorrowing throng of attached friends, amongst them LISZT, BÜLOW, RICHTER, JOUKOVSKY, and

361. THE GRAVE.

many more. On either side walked WAGNER's children, and when the coffin was about to be slid into the grave, they mounted on the grey slab above it and knelt down.

At this moment WAGNER's two favourite dogs burst through the thickets, and sprang towards the children to seek their usual caresses—they, too, had lost a kind master, but they knew it not.

Then HERR CASELMANN, in the simplest words, committed the departed, and all his family, to the care of CHRIST, and blessed the assembly and the grave in the name of the Church. This was all in exact accordance with MADAME WAGNER's wishes. A few took a leaf or a flower as it fell from the piled-up heap, and the body was lowered silently into its last resting-place—earth to earth—dust to dust!

. . . . .

I visited Bayreuth on the 24th of July, 1883, and attended two crowded performances of WAGNER's last work,

362. I VISIT WAGNER'S GRAVE.

Parsifal. In the morning I went into the beautiful gardens of the Neue Schloss. On either side of a lake, upon which floated a couple of swans and innumerable water-lilies, the long park-like avenues of trees are vocal with wild doves, and the robin is heard in the adjoining thickets. At my approach the sweet song ceases abruptly, and the startled bird flies out, scattering the pale petals of the wild roses

upon my path. I follow a stream of people on foot, as they move down the left-hand avenue in the garden of the Neue Schloss, which adjoins WAGNER'S own grounds.

Some are going—some are coming. Presently I see an opening in the bushes on my left; the path leads me to a clump of evergreens. I follow it, and come suddenly on the great composer's grave. All about the green square mound the trees are thick—laurel, fir, and yew. The shade falls funereally across the immense grey granite slab; but over the dark foliage the sky is bright blue, and straight in front of me, above the low bushes, I can see the bow-windows of the dead master's study—where I spent with him one delightful evening in 1876.

I can see, too, the jet of water that he loved playing high above the hedge of evergreen. It lulls me with its sound. "Vahnfried! Vahnfried!" it seems to murmur. It was the word written above the master's house—the word he most loved—the word his tireless spirit most believed in—how shall I render it? "Dream-life! dream-life! Earth's illusion of joy!"

Great spirit! thy dream-life here is past, and face to face with truth, "rapt from the fickle and the frail," for thee the illusion has vanished! Mayst thou also know the fulness of joy in the unbroken and serene activities of the eternal Reality!

I visited the grave twice. There is nothing written on the granite slab. There were never present less than twenty

persons, and a constant stream of pilgrims kept coming and going.

One gentle token of the master's pitiful and tender regard for the faithful dumb animals he so loved lies but a few feet off in the same garden, and not far from his own grave.

Upon a mossy bank, surrounded with evergreens, is a small marble slab, with this inscription to his favourite dog:—

"*Here lies in peace 'Vahnfried's' faithful watcher and friend—the good and beautiful Mark*" (der gute, schöne Mark)!

I returned, too, to WAGNER's tomb, plucked a branch of the fir tree that waved above it, and went back to my room to prepare myself by reading and meditation for the great religious drama which I was to witness at four o'clock in the afternoon—WAGNER's latest and highest inspiration—the story of the sacred brotherhood, the knights of San Graal—*Parsifal!*

III.

Interlude

ON THE LAST CROWN.

Wagner worked at *Parsifal* with incredible speed, but with that extraordinary elaboration of detail which he himself declared taxed his brain to the utmost. He sometimes complained that he could employ no one to help him adequately in scoring the parts. Nothing ever satisfied him unless he did it himself. As he advanced the toil increased. He would say that even the score of *Lohengrin*—in which he had not yet sounded all the resources of the orchestral art—was light work in comparison with such an effort as *Parsifal*. He laboured at this with great love and tireless zeal. He often declared that it would be his last work, although his busy brain, at Venice, was already revolving new fields of thought—new worlds to conquer.

363. ELABORATE SCORING.

His friends noticed with anxiety that failing freshness and vigour of body—not of mind—pathetic traces of which are noticeable in that last very fine photograph (profile) of which I give a woodcut, and which has been engraved in most of the memoirs since published. The expression of the countenance is softened. It is the face of a man who has done with fighting and escaped defeat, but is left with a certain weariness of spirit.

364. LAST PHOTOGRAPH.

Still, the last year of WAGNER's life was full of halcyon days; his sun went down in a sky of unclouded serenity. He had won more than all he could have expected to win; for in the early days he had often said in despair, "I shall never make my ideas understood"—and he lived to see the mighty conceptions of his genius realised.

His farewell banquet at Bayreuth after the *Parsifal* festival in 1882 was a dignified and touching adieu to friends, many of whom he was never to see again. Something has been said about a feeling of rivalry between LISZT and WAGNER in the last days. Nothing could be more false and unfounded. "WAGNER a fait un autre miracle," said LISZT, when he attended the rehearsals of *Parsifal* in 1882, and WAGNER's affectionate speech in answer to the glowing language in which LISZT proposed his health at the great banquet held afterwards, showed very well how deep and indissoluble was the nature of their friendship. When LISZT sat down

365. SPEECHES BY LISZT AND WAGNER.

amidst loud acclamations, WAGNER rose, and in the following simple and unaffected words recalled all he owed to LISZT:

"On this day, when the preparations for the performances of my last work are completed; when, thanks to this concourse of eminent artists, I may look with pleasure and pride on the achievement, I feel myself called upon to speak, to all of you assembled here at my invitation, of the influence that this exceptional and unique man has had on my whole artistic career. At a time when—as they say in Germany—I was a most distinctly repudiated 'Mossoo,' LISZT came forward—LISZT, who had evolved from his innermost consciousness a profound comprehension of myself and my work. He said to me, 'Thou man of Art, I believe in thee,' and so he became the bridge that led me from one world to another—from the inner world, I mean, into which I had unreservedly retired, into the outer world on whose discerning judgment the creative artist has to depend, and in which, at that time, every hand was against me. He it is that sustained and uplifted me as no other did. I call upon you to drink to the health of F. LISZT."

When WAGNER, in the autumn of 1882, left the cloudy skies of Bayreuth for sunny Italy, he also left the scene of his triumphs, which he was never to revisit alive. In the spring of the following year, as I have related, his body was brought back and laid in his garden at Bayreuth, and in the July following I went to Bayreuth to be present at

the repetition of the *Parsifal* performances, every detail of which WAGNER had superintended in the previous year. I shall never see the like again—the glow of the master's spirit was still upon the actors, the musicians, and the audience.

IV.

PARSIFAL.

THE blood of God!—mystic symbol of Divine life—"for the blood is the life thereof." That is the key-note of *Parsifal*, the Knight of the Sangrail. Wine is the ready symbolical vehicle—the material link between the divine and the human life. In the old religions, that heightened consciousness, that intensity of feeling produced by stimulant, was thought to be the very entering in of the "god"—the union of the Divine and human spirit; and in the Eleusinian mysteries, the "sesame"—the bread of Demeter, the earth mother; the "kykeon," or wine of Dionysos—the vine god—were thus sacramental.

366. THE MYSTIC UNION.

The passionate desire to approach and mingle with Deity is the one mystic bond common to all religions in all

lands. It is the "cry of the human": it traverses the ages, it exhausts many symbols and transcends all forms.

To the Christian it is summed up in the "Lord's Supper."

The mediæval legend of the Sangrail (real or royal blood) is the most poetic and pathetic form of transubstantiation—in it the gross materialism of the Roman Mass almost ceases to be repulsive; it possesses the true legendary power of attraction and assimilation.

As the Knights of the Table Round, with their holy vows, provided mediæval Chivalry with a centre, so did the Lord's table, with its Sangrail, provide Mediæval Religion with its central attractive point. And as all marvellous tales of knightly heroism circled round King Arthur's table, so did the great legends embodying the Christian conceptions of sin, punishment, and redemption circle round the Sangrail and the sacrifice of the "Mass."

In the legends of *Parsifal* and *Lohengrin*, the knightly and religious elements are welded together. This is enough. We need approach *Parsifal* with no deep knowledge of the various Sagas made use of by WAGNER in his drama. His disciples, whilst most eager to trace its various elements to their sources, are most emphatic in declaring that the *Parsifal* drama, so intimately true to the spirit of Roman Catholicism, is nevertheless a new creation.

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA received in a crystal cup the blood of CHRIST as it flowed from the spear-wound made by the Roman soldier. The cup and the spear were committed to Titurel, who became a holy knight and head of a sacred brotherhood of knights. They dwelt in the Vizigoth Mountains of Southern Spain, where, amidst impenetrable forests, rose the legendary palace of Montsalvat. Here they guarded the sacred relics, issuing forth at times from their palatial fortress, like Lohengrin, to fight for innocence and right, and always returning to renew their youth and strength by the celestial contemplation of the Sangrail, and by occasional participation in the holy feast.

367. MONTSALVAT.

Time and history count for very little in these narratives. It was allowed, however, that Titurel the Chief had grown extremely aged, but as it was not allowed that he could die in the presence of the Sangrail, he seemed to have been laid in a kind of trance, resting in an open tomb beneath the altar of the Grail; and whenever the cup was uncovered his voice might be heard joining in the celebration. Meanwhile, Amfortis, his son, reigned in his stead.

368. TITUREL.

Montsalvat, with its pure, contemplative, but active brotherhood, and its mystic cup, thus stands out as the poetic symbol of all that is highest and best in mediæval Christianity.

The note of the wicked world—Magic for Devotion—Sensuality for Worship—breaks in upon our vision, as the scene changes from the halls of Montsalvat to

369. KLINGSOR.

Klingsor's palace. Klingsor, an impure knight, who has been refused admittance to the order of the "Sangrail," enters into a compact with the powers of evil—by magic acquires arts of diabolical fascination—fills his palace and gardens with enchantments, and wages bitter war against the holy knights, with a view of corrupting them, and ultimately, it may be, of acquiring for himself the "Sangrail," in which all power is believed to reside. Many knights have already succumbed to the "insidious arts" of Klingsor; but the tragical turning point of the *Parsifal* is that Amfortis, himself the son of Titurel, the official guardian of the Grail, in making war upon the magician, took with him the sacred spear, and *lost* it to Klingsor.

It came about in this way. A woman of unearthly loveliness won him in the enchanted bowers, adjoining the evil knight's palace, and Klingsor, seizing the

370. THE FALL OF AMFORTIS.

holy spear, thrust it into Amfortis' side, inflicting therewith an incurable wound. The brave knight, Gurnemanz, dragged his master fainting from the garden, his companions of the Sangrail covering their retreat. But returned to Montsalvat, the unhappy king awakes only to bewail his sin, the loss of the sacred spear,

and the ceaseless harrowing smart of an incurable wound. But who is Parsifal?

. . . . .

The smell of pine-woods in July! The long avenue outside the city of Bayreuth, that leads straight up the hill, crowned by the Wagner Theatre, a noble structure — architecturally admirable — severe, simple, but exactly adapted to its purpose . . . . I join the stream of pilgrims, some in carriages, others on foot. As we approach, a clear blast of trombones and brass from the terrace in front of the grand entrance, plays out the Grail "motive." It is the well-known signal—there is no time to be lost. I enter at the prescribed door, and find myself close to my appointed place. Everyone—such is the admirable arrangement—seems to do likewise. In a few minutes about one thousand persons are seated without confusion. The theatre is darkened, the foot-lights are lowered, the prelude begins.

371. I ENTER THE THEATRE.

Act I.

The waves of sound rise from the shadowy gulph sunken between the audience and the foot-lights. Upon the sound ocean of "wind" the "Take eat," or "Love-feast" motive floats. Presently the strings pierce through it, the Spear motive follows, and then, full of heavy pain, "Drink ye all of this," followed

372. ORCHESTRAL PRELUDE.

by the famous Grail motive—an old chorale also used by MENDELSSOHN in the Reformation Symphony. Then comes the noble Faith and Love theme.

As I sit in the low light, amidst the silent throng, and listen, I need no interpreter, I am being placed in possession of the emotional key-notes of the drama. Every subject is first distinctly enunciated, and then all are wondrously blended together. There is the pain of Sacrifice—the mental agony, the bodily torture—there are the alternate pauses of Sorrow and respite from sorrow long drawn out, the sharp ache of Sin, the glimpses of unhallowed Joy, the strain of upward Endeavour, the serene peace of Faith and Love, crowned by the blessed Vision of the Grail. 'Tis past. The prelude melts into the opening recitative.

The eyes have now to play their part. The curtain rises, the story begins. The morning breaks slowly, the grey streaks redden, a lovely summer landscape lies bathed in primrose light. Under the shadow of a noble tree, the aged knight, Gurnemanz, has been resting with two young attendants. From the neighbouring halls of Montsalvat the solemn *reveillé*—the Grail motive—rings out, and all three sink on their knees in prayer. The sun bursts forth in splendour, as the hymn rises to mingle with the voices of universal nature. The waves of sound well up and fill the soul with unspeakable thankfulness and praise.

373. SUNRISE.

The talk is of Amfortis, the king, and of his incurable wound. A wild gallop, a rush of sound, and a weird woman, with streaming hair, springs towards the startled group. She bears a phial, with rare balsam from the Arabian shores. It is for the king's wound. Who is the wild horsewoman?—Kundry—strange creation—a being doomed to wander—like the Wandering Jew, the wild Huntsman, or Flying Dutchman—always seeking a deliverance she cannot find—Kundry, who, in ages gone by, met the Saviour on the road to Calvary, and derided him. Some said she was Herodias' daughter. Now filled with remorse, yet weighted with sinful longings, she serves by turns the Knights of the Grail, then falls under the spell of Klingsor, the evil knight sorcerer, and in the guise of an enchantress, is compelled by him to seduce, if possible, the Knights of the Grail.

374. KUNDRY.

Eternal symbol of the divided allegiance of a woman's soul! She it was who, under the sensual spell, as an incarnation of loveliness, overcame Amfortis, and she it is now who, in her ardent quest for salvation—changed and squalid in appearance—serves the Knights of the Grail, and seeks to heal Amfortis' wound!

No sooner has she delivered her balsam to the faithful Gurnemanz, and thrown herself exhausted upon the grass—where she lies gnawing her hair morosely—than a change n the sound atmosphere, which never ceases to be generated

in the mystic orchestral gulph, presages the approach of Amfortis.

He comes, borne on a litter, to his morning bath in the shining lake hard by. Sharp is the pain of the wound—weary and hopeless is the king. Through the Wound-motive comes the sweet woodland music and the breath of the blessed morning, fragrant with flowers and fresh with dew. It is one of those incomparable bursts of woodland notes, full of bird-song and the happy hum of insect life and rustling of netted branches and waving of long tasselled grass. I know of nothing like it save the forest music in *Siegfried.*

375. AMFORTIS APPROACHES.

The sick king listens, and remembers words of hope and comfort that fell from a heavenly voice—what time the glory of the Grail passed—

"Durch mitleid Wissend
Der reine Thor,
Harre sein
Den ich erkor."

"Wait for my chosen one,
Guileless and innocent,
Pity-enlightened."

They hand him the phial of balsam; and presently, whilst the lovely forest music again breaks forth, the king is carried on to his bath, and Kundry, Gurnemanz, and the two esquires hold the stage.

As the old knight, who is a complete repertory of facts

connected with the Grail tradition, unfolds to the esquires the nature of the king's wound, the sorceries of Klingsor, the hope of deliverance from some unknown "guileless one," a sudden cry breaks up the situation.

376. GURNEMANZ'S NARRATIVE.

A white swan, pierced by an arrow, flutters dying to the ground. It is the swan beloved of the Grail brotherhood, bird of fair omen, symbol of spotless purity. The slayer is brought in between two knights—a stalwart youth, fearless, unabashed—whilst the death-music of the swan, the slow distilling and stiffening of its life-blood, is marvellously rendered by the orchestra. Conviction of his fault comes over the youth as he listens to the reproaches of Gurnemanz. He hangs his head, ashamed and penitent, and at last with a sudden passion of remorse snaps his bow, and flings it aside. The swan is borne off, and Parsifal (the "guileless one," for he it is), with Gurnemanz and Kundry—who rouses herself and surveys Parsifal with strange, almost savage curiosity—hold the stage.

In this scene Kundry tells the youth more than he cares to hear about himself. How his father, Gamuret, was a great knight killed in battle; how his mother, Herzeleide (Heart's Affliction), fearing a like fate for her son, brought him up in the lonely forest; how he left her to follow a troop of knights that he met one

377. KUNDRY'S NARRATIVE.

day winding through the forest glade, and being led on and on in pursuit of them, never overtook them and never returned to his mother, Heart's Affliction, who died of grief. At this point the frantic youth seizes Kundry by the throat in an agony of rage and grief, but is held back by Gurnemanz, till, worn out by the violence of his emotion, he faints away, and is gradually revived by Kundry and Gurnemanz.

Suddenly Kundry rises with a wild look, like one under a spell. Her mood of service is over. She staggers across the stage—she can hardly keep awake. "Sleep," she mutters, "I must sleep—sleep!" and falls down in one of those long trances which apparently lasted for months, or years, and formed the transition periods between her mood of Grail service and the Klingsor slavery into which she must next relapse in spite of herself.

378. KUNDRY'S SLEEP.

And is this the guileless one? This wild youth who slays the fair swan—who knows not his own name nor whence he comes, nor whither he goes, nor what are his destinies? The old knight eyes him curiously—he will put him to the test. This youth had seen the king pass once—he had marked his pain. Was he "enlightened by pity?" Is he the appointed deliverer? The old knight now invites him to the shrine of the Grail.

379. PASSAGE TO MONTSALVAT.

"What is the Grail?" asks the youth. Truly a guileless, innocent one! yet a brave and pure knight, since he has known no evil, and so readily repents of a fault committed in ignorance.

Gurnemanz is strangely drawn to him. He shall see the Grail, and in the Holy Palace, what time the mystic light streams forth and the assembled knights bow themselves in prayer, the voice which comforted Amfortis shall speak to his deliverer and bid him arise and heal the king.

* * * * *

Gurnemanz and Parsifal have ceased to speak. They stand in the glowing light of the summer-land. The tide of music rolls on continuously, but sounds more strange and dreamy.

* * * * *

Is it a cloud passing over the sky? There seems to be a shuddering in the branches—the light fades upon yonder sunny woodlands—the foreground darkens apace. The whole scene is moving, but so slowly that it seems to change like a dissolving view. I see the two figures of Gurnemanz and Parsifal moving through the trees—they are lost behind yonder rock. They emerge further off—higher up. The air grows very dim; the orchestra peals louder and louder. I lose the two in the deepening twilight. The forest is changing, the land is wild and mountainous. Huge galleries and arcades, rock-hewn, loom through the dim forest; but all is growing dark. I listen to the murmurs of the

"Grail," the "Spear," the "Pain," the "Love and Faith" motives—hollow murmurs, confused, floating out of the depths of lonely caves. Then I have a feeling of void and darkness, and there comes a sighing as of a soul swooning away in a trance, and a vision of waste places and wild caverns; and then through the confused dream I hear the solemn boom of mighty bells, only muffled. They keep time as to some ghostly march. I strain my eyes into the thick gloom before me. Is it a rock, or forest, or palace?

380. THE HALL OF THE KNIGHTS.

As the light returns slowly, a hall of more than Alhambra-like splendour opens before me. My eyes are riveted on the shining pillars of variegated marble, the tesselated pavements, the vaulted roof glowing with gold and colour; beyond, arcades of agate columns, bathed in a misty moonlight air, and lost in a bewildering perspective of halls and corridors.

I hear the falling of distant water in marble fonts; the large bells of Montsalvat peal louder and louder, and to music of unimaginable stateliness the knights enter in solemn procession, clad in the blue and red robes of the Grail, and take their seats at two semicircular tables which start like arms to the right and left of the holy shrine. Beneath it lies Titurel entranced, and upon it is presently deposited the sacred treasure of the Grail itself.

As the wounded King Amfortis is borne in, the assembled

knights, each standing in his place, a golden cup before him, intone the Grail motive, which is taken up by the entering choruses of servitors and esquires bearing the holy relics.

381. THE HOLY GRAIL.

Gurnemanz is seated amongst the knights; Parsifal stands aside and looks on in mute astonishment, "a guileless one."

As the Holy Grail is set down on the altar before the wounded king, a burst of heavenly music streams from the high dome—voices of angels intone the celestial phrases, "*Take, eat*" and "*this is my blood!*" and blend them with the "faith and love" motives. As the choruses die away, the voice of the entranced Titurel is heard from beneath the altar calling upon Amfortis, his son, to uncover the Grail that he may find refreshment and life in the blessed vision.

Then follows a terrible struggle in the breast of Amfortis. *He,* sore stricken in sin, yet guardian of the Grail, guilty among the guiltless, oppressed with pain, bowed down with shame, craving for restoration, o'erwhelmed with unworthiness, yet chosen to stand and minister before the Lord on behalf of His saints! Pathetic situation, which must in all times repeat itself in the history of the Church. The unworthiness of the minister affects not the validity of his consecrated acts. Yet what agony of mind must many a priest have suffered, himself oppressed with sin and doubt, whilst dispensing the means of grace, and acting as a minister and steward of the mysteries.

The marvellous piece of self-analysis in which the conscience-stricken king bewails his lot, as little admits of description here as the music which embodies his emotions.

At the close of it angel voices seem floating in mid-air, sighing the mystic words :

"Durch mitleid Wissend
Der reine Thor,
Harre sein,
Den ich erkor."

"Wait for my chosen one,
Guileless and innocent,
Pity-enlightened."

And immediately afterwards the voice of Titurel, like one turning restlessly in his sleep, comes up from his living tomb beneath the altar, "*Uncover the Grail!*"

With trembling hands the sick king raises himself, and with a great effort staggers towards the shrine—the covering is removed—he takes the crystal cup—he raises it on high—the blood is dark—the light begins to fade in the hall—a mist and dimness come over the scene—we seem to be assisting at a shadowy ceremony in a dream—the big bells are tolling—the heavenly choirs from above the dome, which is now bathed in twilight, are heard : "*Drink ye all of this*" Amfortis raises on high the crystal vase—the knights fall on their knees in prayer. Suddenly a faint tremor of light quivers in the crystal cup—then the blood grows ruby red for a moment. Amfortis waves it to and fro—the knights gaze

382. THIS IS MY BLOOD.

in ecstatic adoration. Titurel's voice gathers strength in his tomb:

"Celestial rapture!
How streams the light upon the face of God!"

The light fades slowly out of the crystal cup—the miracle is accomplished. The blood again grows dark—the light of common day returns to the halls of Montsalvat, and the knights resume their seats, to find each one his golden goblet filled with wine.

During the sacred repast which follows the brotherhood join hands and embrace, singing:

"Blessed are they that believe;
Blessed are they that love!"

and the refrain is heard again far up in the heights, re-echoed by the angelic hosts.

. . . . .

I looked round upon the silent audience whilst these astonishing scenes were passing before me; the whole assembly was motionless — all seemed to be solemnised by the august spectacle — seemed almost to share in the devout contemplation and trance-like worship of the holy knights. Every thought of the stage had vanished—nothing was further from my own thoughts than play-acting. I was sitting as I should sit at an oratorio, in devout and rapt contemplation. Before my eyes had passed a symbolic vision of prayer and ecstacy,

383. THE SPIRITUAL IMPRESSION MADE.

flooding the soul with overpowering thoughts of the Divine sacrifice and the mystery of unfathomable love.

. . . . .

The hall of Montsalvat empties. Gurnemanz strides excitedly up to Parsifal, who stands stupefied with what he has seen—

> "Why standest thou silent?
> Knowest thou what thine eyes have seen?"

The guileless one shakes his head. "Nothing but a fool!" exclaims Gurnemanz, angrily; and seizing Parsifal by the shoulder, he pushes him roughly out of the hall, with:

> "Be off! look after thy geese,
> And henceforth leave our swans in peace."

The Grail vision had, then, taught the "guileless one" nothing. He could not see his mission—he was as yet unawakened to the deeper life of the spirit; though blameless and unsullied, he was still the "natural man." Profound truth! that was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural: before Parsifal wins a spiritual triumph, he must be spiritually tried; his inner life must be deepened and developed, else he can never read aright the message of the Grail.

384. THE MEANING OF THE GUILELESS FOOL.

The life of God in the spirit comes only when the battle for God in the heart has been fought and won.

Fare forth, thou guileless one! thou shalt yet add to the simplicity of the dove the wisdom of the serpent. Thou art

innocent because ignorant; but thou shalt be weighed anon in the balance and not be found wanting: and then shalt thou re-conquer the holy spear lost in Sin, re-won in Purity and Sacrifice, and be to the frail Amfortis the chosen saviour for whom he waits.

. . . . .

The foregoing events occupied about an hour and a quarter. When the curtain fell, the vast audience broke up in silence.

The air outside was cool and balmy. In the distance lay the city of Bayreuth, with the tower of the Alte Schloss and the old church standing up grey against the distant Bavarian hills.

All around us lay the pine woods, broken by the lawns and avenues that encircle the theatre and embower it in a secluded world of its own—even as the Palace of the Grail was shut off from the profane world.

Here, indeed, is truly the Montsalvat of the modern drama—a spot purified and sacred to the highest aims and noblest manifestations of Art.

In about an hour the Spear motive was the signal blown on the wind instruments outside, and I took my seat for the second act.

Act II.

A restless, passion-tossed prelude. The "Grail" subject distorted, the "Spear" motive thrust in discordant, the

"Faith and love" theme fluttering like a wounded dove in pain, fierce bursts of passion, wild shocks of uncontrolled misery, mingling with the "carnal joy" music of Klingsor's magic garden and the shuddering might of his alchemy.

385. KLINGSOR PRELUDE.

The great magician, Klingsor, is seen alone in his dungeon palace—harsh contrast to the gorgeous halls of Montsalvat. Here all is built of the live rock, an impenetrable fastness, the home of devilish might and terrible spells.

Klingsor is aware of the coming struggle, and he means to be ready for it. He owns the sacred spear wrested from Amfortis; he even aspires to win the Grail; he knows the "guileless one" is on his way to wrest that spear from him. His only hope is in paralysing the fool by his enchantments as he paralysed Amfortis, and the same woman will serve his turn.

386. APPARITION OF KUNDRY.

"Kundry!" The time is come, the spells are woven—blue vapours rise, and in the midst of the blue vapours, the figure of the still sleeping Kundry is seen. She wakes, trembling violently; she knows she is again under the spell she abhors—the spell to do evil, the mission to corrupt. With a shuddering scream she stands before her tormentor, denying his power, loathing to return to her vile mission, yet returning, as with a bitter cry she vanishes from his presence.

Parsifal has invaded Klingsor's realm; the evil knights

have fled before his prowess, wounded and in disorder. Kundry is commissioned to meet the guileless youth in the enchanted garden and, all other allurements failing, to subdue him by her irresistible fascinations and hand him over to Klingsor.

387. GARDEN OF GIRLS.

In a moment the scenery lifts, and a garden of marvellous beauty and extent lies before us. The flowers are all of colossal dimensions—huge roses hang in tangled festoons, the cactus, the lily, the blue-bell, creepers and orchids of enormous size and dazzling colour wave in mid-air, and climb the aromatic trees.

On a bright hill appears Parsifal, standing bewildered by the light and loveliness around him. Beautiful girls, dressed like flowers, and hardly distinguishable from them at first, rush in, bewailing their wounded and disabled knights; but on seeing Parsifal, fall upon their new prey, and surrounding him, sing verse after verse of the loveliest ballet music, whilst trying to embrace him, and quarrelling with each other for the privilege.

About that wonderful chorus of flower-girls there was just a suggestive touch of the Rhine maidens' singing. It belonged to the same school of thought and feeling, but was freer, wilder—more considerable, and altogether more complex and wonderful in its changes and in the marvellous confusion in which it breaks up.

The guileless one resists these charmers, and they are

just about to leave him in disgust, when the roses lift on one side, and, stretched on a mossy bank overhung with flowers, appears a woman of unearthly loveliness. It is Kundry transformed, and in the marvellous duet which follows between her and Parsifal, a perfectly new and original type of love duet is struck out—an analysis of character, unique in musical drama—a combination of sentiment and a situation absolutely novel, which could only have been conceived and carried out by a creative genius of the highest order.

388. THE NEW LOVE DUET. AN ANALYSIS.

First, I note that the once spell-bound Kundry is devoted utterly to her task of winning Parsifal, into this she throws all the intensity of her wild and desperate nature, but in turn she is strangely affected by the spiritual atmosphere of the "guileless one"—a feeling comes over her in the midst of her witchcraft passion, that he is in some way to be her saviour too; yet, woman-like, she conceives of her salvation as possible only in union with him. Yet was this the very crime to which Klingsor would drive her for the ruin of Parsifal. Strange confusion of thought, feeling, aspiration, longing!—struggle of irreconcileable elements! How shall she reconcile them? Her intuition fails her not, and her tact triumphs. She will win by stealing his love through his mother's love. A mother's love is holy—that love she tells him of—it can never more be his—but she

will replace it—her passion shall be sanctified by it—through *that* passion she has sinned, through it she, too, shall be redeemed. She will work out her own salvation by the very spells that are upon her for evil. He is pure—he shall make her pure, could she but win him—both, by the might of such pure love, would surely be delivered from Klingsor the corrupter, the tormentor. Fatuous dream! How, through corruption, win incorruption? How, through indulgence, win peace and freedom from desire? It is the old cheat of the senses—Satan appears as an angel of light. The thought deludes the unhappy Kundry herself—she is no longer consciously working for Klingsor, she really believes that this new turn, this bias given to passion, will purify both her and the guileless, pure fool she seeks to subdue.

Nothing can describe the subtlety of their long interview; the surprising turns of sentiment and contrasts of feeling. Throughout this scene Parsifal's instinct is absolutely true and sure. Everything Kundry says about his mother, Herzeleide, he feels; but every attempt to make him accept her instead he resists. Her desperate declamation is splendid. Her heartrending sense of misery and piteous prayer for salvation, her belief that before her is her saviour could she but win him to her will, the choking fury of baffled passion, the steady and subtle encroachments made whilst Parsifal is lost in a meditative dream, the burning kiss which recalls him to himself, the fine touch

by which this kiss, whilst arousing in him the stormiest feelings, causes a sharp pain, as of Amfortis' own wound, piercing his very heart. All this is realistic if you will, but it is realism raised to the sublime.

Suddenly Parsifal springs up, hurls the enchantress from him, will forth from Klingsor's realm. She is baffled, she knows it; for a moment she bars his passage, then succumbs; the might of sensuality which lost Amfortis the sacred spear, has been met and defeated by the guileless fool. He has passed from innocence to knowledge in his interview with the flower-girt girls, in his long converse with Kundry, in her insidious embrace, in her kiss; but, all these are now thrust aside, he steps forth still unconquered, still "guileless," but no more "a fool." The knowledge of good and evil has come, but the struggle is already passed.

389. KUNDRY BAFFLED.

"Yes, sinner, I do offer thee Redemption," he can say to Kundry; "not in thy way, but in thy Lord Christ's way of sacrifice!"

But the desperate creature, wild with passion, will listen to no reason; she shouts aloud to her master, and Klingsor suddenly appears, poising the sacred spear. In another moment he hurls it right across the enchanted garden at Parsifal. It cannot wound the guileless and pure one as it wounded the sinful Amfortis. A miracle! It hangs arrested in the air above Parsifal's head; he seizes it—it is the

sacred talisman, one touch of which will heal even as it inflicted the king's deadly wound.

With a mighty cry and the shock as of an earthquake, the castle of Klingsor falls shattered to pieces, the garden withers up to a desert, the girls, who have rushed in, lie about amongst the fading flowers, themselves withered up and dead. Kundry sinks down in a deathly swoon, whilst Parsifal steps over a ruined wall and disappears, saluting her with the words: "Thou alone knowest when we shall meet again!"

* * * * *

The long shadows were stealing over the hills when I came out at the second pause. Those whom I met and conversed with were subdued and awed. What a solemn tragedy of human passion we had been assisting at! Not a heart there but could interpret that struggle between the flesh and the spirit from its own experiences. Not one but knew the desperately wicked and deceitful temptations that come like enchantresses in the wizard's garden, to plead the cause of the devil in the language of high-flown sentiment or even religious feeling.

390. SOLEMN THOUGHTS.

Praise and criticism seemed dumb; we rather walked and spoke of what we had just witnessed like men convinced of judgment, and righteousness, and sin. It was a strange mood in which to come out of a theatre after witnessing what would commonly be called an "Opera."

I felt more than ever the impossibility of producing the

Parsifal in London, at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, before a well-dressed company of loungers, who had well dined, and were on their way to balls and suppers afterwards.

I would as soon see the Oberammergau play at a music hall.

No; in *Parsifal* all is solemn, or all is irreverent. At Bayreuth we came on a pilgrimage; it cost us time, and trouble, and money; we were in earnest—so were the actors; the spirit of the great master who had planned every detail seemed still to preside over all; the actors lived in their parts; not a thought of self remained; no one accepted applause or recall; no one aimed at producing a personal effect; the actors were lost in the drama, and it was the drama and not the actors which had impressed and solemnised us. When I came out they asked who was Amfortis? I did not know. I said "the wounded king."

As the instruments played out the Faith and Love motive for us to re-enter, the mellow sunshine broke once more from the cloud-rack over city, and field, and forest, before sinking behind the long low range of the distant hills.

Act III.

391. PRELUDE OF THE YEARS.

The opening prelude to the third and last act seems to warn me of the lapse of time. The music is full of pain and restlessness—the pain of wretched years of long waiting for a deliverer, who comes not; the restlessness and misery of a hope deferred, the

weariness of a life without a single joy. The motives, discoloured as it were by grief, work up to a distorted version of the Grail subject, which breaks off as with a cry of despair.

Is the Grail, too, then turned into a mocking spirit to the unhappy Amfortis?

Relief comes to us with the lovely scene upon which the curtain rises. Again the wide summer land lies stretching away over sunlit moor and woodland. In the foreground wave the forest trees, and I hear the ripple of the woodland streams. Invariably throughout the drama, in the midst of all human pain and passion, great nature is there, peaceful, harmonious in all her loveliest moods; a paradise in which dwell souls who make of her their own purgatory.

392 THE SUMMER LAND.

In yonder aged figure, clad in the Grail pilgrim robe, I discern Gurnemanz; his hair is white; he stoops with years; a rude hut is hard by. Presently a groan arrests his attention, moaning as of a human thing in distress. He clears away some brushwood, and beneath it finds, waking from her long trance, the strange figure of Kundry. For how many years has she slept, we know not. Why is she now recalled to life? She staggers to her feet; we see that she too is in a pilgrim garb, with a rope girding her dress of coarse brown serge.

393. WAKING OF KUNDRY.

"Service! service!" she mutters, and seizing a pitcher, moves mechanically to fill it at the well, then totters but half awake into the wooden hut. The forest music breaks forth—the hum of happy insect life, the song of wild birds. All seems to pass as in a vision; when suddenly enters a knight clad in black armour from top to toe.

The two eye him curiously, and Gurnemanz, approaching, bids him lay aside his armour and his weapons. He carries a long spear. In silence the knight unhelms, and sticking the spear into the ground, kneels before it, and remains lost in devotional contemplation. The "Spear" and "Grail" motives mingle together in the full tide of orchestral sounds carrying on the emotional undercurrent of the drama. The knight is soon recognised by both as the long-lost and discarded Parsifal.

394. THE BLACK KNIGHT.

The "guileless one" has learned wisdom, and discovered his mission—he knows now that he bears the spear which is to heal the king's grievous wound, and that he himself is appointed his successor. Through long strife and trial and pain he seems to have grown into something of Christ's own likeness. Not all at once, but at last he has found the path. He returns to bear salvation and pardon both to Kundry and the wretched king, Amfortis.

The full music flows on whilst Gurnemanz relates how the knights have all grown weak and aged, deprived of the

vision and sustenance of the Holy Grail, whilst the long-entranced Titurel is at last dead.

At this news Parsifal, overcome with grief, swoons away, and Gurnemanz and Kundry loosen his armour, and sprinkle him with water from the holy spring. Underneath his black suit of mail he appears clad in a long white tunic.

The grouping is here admirable; Gurnemanz is in the Templar's red and blue robe; Parsifal in white, his auburn hair parted in front, and flowing down in ringlets on either side, recalls Leonardo's favourite conception of the Saviour's head, and, indeed, from this point Parsifal becomes a kind of symbolic reflection of the Lord Himself. Kundry, subdued and awed, lies weeping at his feet; he lifts his hands to bless her with infinite pity. She washes his feet, and dries them with the hairs of her head. It is a bold stroke, but the voices of nature, the murmur of the summer woods, come with an infinite healing tenderness and pity, and the act is seen to be symbolical of the pure devotion of a sinful creature redeemed from sin. Peace has at last entered into that wild and troubled heart, and restless Kundry, delivered from Klingsor's spell, receives the sprinkling of baptismal water at the hands of Parsifal.

395. A SACRED PICTURE.

. . . . .

The great spaces of silence in the dialogue, broken now by a few sentences from Parsifal, now from Gurnemanz, are more eloquent than many words. The tidal music flows

on in a ceaseless stream of changing harmonies, returning constantly to the sweet and slumbrous sound of the summer land, full of teeming life and glowing happiness.

Then Gurnemanz takes up his parable. It is the Blessed Good Friday on which our dear Lords uffered. The Love and Faith phrases are chimed forth, the pain-notes of the Cross agony are sounded and pass, the Grail motive seems to swoon away in descending harmonies, sinking into the woodland voices of universal nature—that trespass-pardoned nature that now seems waking to the day of her glory and innocence.

In that solemn moment Parsifal bends over the subdued and humbled Kundry, and kisses her softly on the brow—

396. THE KISS OF PEACE.

her wild kiss in the garden had kindled in him fierce fire, mingled with the bitter wound-pain; *his* is the seal of her eternal pardon and peace.

In the distance the great bells of Montsalvat are now heard booming solemnly—the air darkens, the light fades out, the slow motion of all the scenery recommences. Again I hear the wild cave music, strange and hollow sounding—the three move on as in a dream, and are soon lost in the deep shadows; and through all, louder and louder, boom the heavy bells of Montsalvat, until the stage brightens, and we find ourselves once more in the vast Alhambra-like hall of the knights.

For the last time Amfortis is borne in, and the brother-

hood of the Grail form the procession bearing the sacred relics, which are deposited before him.

The king, in great agony and despair, bewails the death of his father and his own backsliding. With failing but desperate energy he harangues the assembled knights, and, tottering forward, beseeches them to free him from his misery and sin-stained life, and thrust their swords deep into his wounded side. At this moment Gurnemanz, accompanied by Parsifal and Kundry, enter. Parsifal steps forward with the sacred spear, now at length to be restored to the knights. He touches the side of Amfortis, the wound is healed, and as he raises the spear on high the point is seen, glowing with the crimson glory of the Grail. Then stepping up to the shrine, Parsifal takes the crystal cup, the dark blood glows bright crimson as he holds it on high, and at that moment, whilst all fall on their knees, and celestial music ("Drink ye all of this") floats in the upper air, Kundry falls back dying, her eyes fixed on the blessed Grail. A white dove descends and hovers for a moment, poised in mid-air above the glowing cup. A soft chorus of angels seems to die away in the clouds beyond the golden dome—

397. AMFORTIS IS HEALED.

"Marvellous mercy!
Victorious Saviour!"

* * * * *

Words can add nothing to the completeness of the drama, and no words can give any idea of the splendour and complexity of that sound ocean upon which the drama floats from beginning to end.

The enemies of the Grail are destroyed or subdued, the wound they have inflicted is healed, the prey they claimed is rescued; the pure and blameless Parsifal becomes the consecrated head of the holy brotherhood, and the beatific vision of God's eternal love and Real Presence is restored to the Knights of the Sangrail.

. . . . .

When I came out of the theatre at the end of the third and last act, it was ten o'clock.

The wind was stirring in the fir trees, the stars gleamed out fitfully through a sky, across which the clouds were hurrying wildly, but the moon rose low and large beyond the shadowy hills, and bathed the misty valleys with a mild and golden radiance as of some celestial dawn.

. . . . .

When the curtain fell on the last performance of *Parsifal*, at Bayreuth, which, on the 30th July 1883, brought the celebration month to a close, the enthusiasm of the audience found full vent in applause. The curtain was once lifted, but no calls would induce the performers to appear a second time or receive any individual homage. This is entirely in accordance with the tone of these exceptional representations. On each

398. A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

occasion the only applause permitted was at the end of the drama, and throughout not a single actor answered to a call or received any personal tribute.

Behind the scenes there occurred a touching incident. The Banker Gross led Wagner's children up to the assembled actors, and in the name of their dead father thanked the assembly for the care and labour of love expended by each and all in producing the last work of the great dead master. Siegfried, Wagner's son, thirteen years old, then, in a few simple words, stifled with sobs, thanked the actors personally, and all the children shook hands with them. The King of Bavaria charged himself upon Wagner's death with the education of his son.

V.

INTERLUDE

ON BAYREUTH CITY.

(A Leaf from my Diary.)

WAGNER has invested Bayreuth with so modern an interest that we are apt to forget that it has had a past; but once walk through it, and the old Markgrave days of the great prince-nobles who owned the town and country round, handing over both to their heirs, come back to us; and here and there a stone relic reminds us of a different sort of world from ours—a world of Hohenzollern and Hohenstaufen, and wars and fightings; aye, and of plague, pestilence, and famine too. That grim warrior prince, armed cap-à-pie, who prances yonder on his stone horse, with an inconvenient quantity of harness on, in front of the New Palace; those vigorous figures riding ancient stone steeds, now half-shattered, at each corner of the fountain—why cannot we make such

399. PAST AND PRESENT.

statues now? Because we don't love hard-fighting—hand to hand. We are not always at it—thinking about it. We shoot the foe two miles off, and carry on war by telegraph. We do not look up to our great nobles or our royal folk because they lead us to battle and fortify the ramparts of our towns; but because they take the chair at public dinners, open hospitals, and encourage music, painting, and the arts of peace. Well, I am content; but there was grit in the old days, for all that.

The annals of Bayreuth go back beyond the eleventh century, and it has had a chequered, though at times glorious career. In 1228, on the death of the last DUKE OTTO II., it was held by PRINCE FREDERICK, together with Nuremberg; and under his successors, who lived here half the year, it reached its golden period. All this must be taken on trust, for of that early period there is nothing left but a few crumbling stones. Fire and plague have dealt very terribly with Bayreuth. In 1430 most of the place—built chiefly of wood—was burnt down. Rebuilt in 1472, it had attained in 1580 to a population of only 1,907; but its increase, in spite of the great sack and slaughter in the days of WALLENSTEIN, was so rapid that in 1634 the plague was able to carry off 2,000 persons, and still leave a goodly population. Since then the plague has ravaged the town no less than five times; 144 houses were burnt down in

400. THE PLAGUE.

1634, and almost the whole town was in flames as late as 1621.

401. MODERN BAYREUTH.

The present Bayreuth dates chiefly from 1655. It is to the Brandenburg Princes who lived here that we owe those palaces and goodly houses, carved stone relics, fountains, and decayed splendours that arrest the eye as you stroll through the Friedrich, Maximilian, or Ludwig streets. The Opera House was built by PRINCE FREDERICK, the husband of the gifted sister of FREDERICK THE GREAT, SOPHIA WILHELMINE, and that lady's ideas of taste and magnificence have been fully carried out. The place is a Renaissance gem. The carved wooden balustrades of the staircase, the gorgeous fittings of the old-fashioned boxes, as they rise in three tiers, the heavy gilding and excessive ornamentation of wreath and canopy over the Royal box, produce a sumptuously impressive effect, and tell of that sort of reckless and lavish expenditure which went on in France in LOUIS the XIV.'s and XV.'s days, and ended in bringing down the tinsel fabric of the old French Monarchy. I suppose FREDERICK THE GREAT could not prevent his relatives from imitating the French opera splendour; and then we all know he was musical, and played the flute himself well enough—for a Prince.

The stage boasts of being the largest in Germany. Per-

haps this, amongst other reasons, induced WAGNER to select Bayreuth as the place where he resolved to deal the old operatic system its death-blow by erecting his new Shrine and Palace of Art sacred to the Musical Drama, but, significantly, outside the city. Since the burning of the Vienna house, the Bayreuth Opera has been closed, the exits being thought inadequate, as indeed they are. When the next fire comes, should it attack the old Opera House, the thing will blaze like tinder. Everyone is exhorted to visit this costly building, but when they get in they find it all pitch dark. A bright light from the bottom of the stage, indeed, streams in, but that only aggravates matters. Stand with your back to it, facing the Royal box, and in a few minutes the gorgeous rows of carved boxes, the heavy golden candelabra and the rich faded velvets, will become visible, and you will be rewarded The house holds about 1,000 people.

402. THE OLD OPERA HOUSE.

I have said that in times past this favoured city has five times been visited by the plague; it now boasts of being one of the healthiest places in Bavaria. It ought to be. It is deliciously situated amidst flowing streams and pine woods; it is 1,060 feet above the sea level, and surrounded by mountains; it has a population of 22,077, and the people, whilst dying at the rate of 24 per annum to the 1,000, increase at the rate of 30, thus gaining annually six on every

403. SMELLS OF THE CITY.

1,000. This may be all true and edifying, I allow, but the smells (whether or not they have anything to do with the plague I don't know) are simply awful. As I walked along the street, I thought I would stand opposite some shop and just glance at my guide-book, but I would take care to select one where there was no smell. I could not find one; open gratings and gutters poured forth their heavy effluvia wherever I paused. They tell us now this is so much more healthy than the new trapped drain. I hope so, because it is so much more unpleasant. I should not wonder if a new visitation of the old plague came ere long to upset this new theory of the blessed sanity of effluvia.

404. ENTERPRIZE OF BAYREUTHERS.

I read in my book, however, that the Bayreuthers are anxious to alleviate the sick and dying, as well as to educate the young and healthy. Not only have they a famous public school, where Jews, Turks, infidels, heretics, and Christians are indiscriminately taught, but they have endless "corpse" societies—or burial clubs—and hospitals for special classes, all which are described in words of such prodigious length that my own poor eloquence withers up as I read them. For instance, a special infirmary for stone-masons and bricklayers is termed a "Kranken-und Unterstützungsverein" for "Männer-und Steinhauergesellen."

After a walk down the principal streets I thought I

would get to a "platz," or open space, and try and breathe the "Himlische Luft," of which GÖTZ VON BERLICHINGEN speaks; so I made for JEAN PAUL RICHTER'S statue, in black bronze. The good man was put up there in 1841, having died in 1825. That is sooner than we build the sepulchres of some of our prophets. LUDWIG, "Duke of Franks" and the King of Bavaria, set him up. I do not know who was the artist—not a Canova, certainly. His head is kindly and commonplace; he wears a flower—which looks like a penny flower—in his button-hole; he holds a pencil in one hand and a pocket-book in the other. He is waiting for an idea! As he has been waiting exactly forty-two years in all sorts of weather, the idea will probably never come to him now. It is painful to think that JEAN PAUL—who never in his life waited a moment for a thought—should be doomed by a heartless sculptor to dawdle on in unpicturesque expectancy and a frock coat, perhaps for centuries longer! I really wonder this did not occur to the artist.

405 JEAN PAUL WAITS.

On the whole, I like the Bayreuth people. The barbers overcharge, the hotel-keepers give you 9.50 marks instead of ten marks for a gold half-sovereign, because they will declare it is "worn"; and the children wear no stockings. The priests, with full choir, stop and sing hymns in the streets when they bring out their dead for burial; and the publicans plant the *cafés* amid thick pine-trees, all stuck in

like a real forest, only *rootless*. The beer—— But I fear my information may become too voluminous.

As I sit and write high up in a spacious room of the old Castle, my windows open, I can look over the sleeping city; and by the faint moonlight I think I can just make out the Wagner Theatre, on a hill beyond the town. It is long past midnight. The clocks have been striking what I believe to be half-past two, although it might just as well mean four o'clock. The night is very still; even the "Vaterland" chorus in the "bier-garten" has left off at last. The *Ring of the Nibelungs—Rheingold, Walküre, Siegfried, and Götterdämmerung*—lies open before me; to-morrow afternoon I shall see the *Rheingold*.

VI.

THE NIBELUNG'S RING.

I.—Rheingold.

406. THE HEAT IN 1876.

THE heat at Bayreuth (August 1876) was intense. The EMPEROR OF GERMANY, who attended some of the performances, expressed his astonishment at the endurance of the orchestra, who had to work by a great power of gas—sunk in a pit beneath the stage.

"I should just like," said his Imperial Majesty, "to go down below and see where my Kapellmeister RICHTER sweats"—and he went.

Notwithstanding the excessively sultry weather, a vast company of Art Pilgrims ascended the hill outside the city, and took their seats nearly every day in WAGNER'S theatre for a month.

Let the reader become with me in imagination one of those pilgrims. If I cannot make the sound of WAGNER'S music ring in his ears, I will try and make a vision of the first Wagner Festival pass before his eyes. As I contemplate Bayreuth, in that same month of August 1876, I perceive the whole city to be given over to a kind of idolatry of WAGNER. The King appears at times to wave incense before him. LISZT, in some degree, shares the homage. With his venerable white head, he looks like an ancient magician, but with an eye that can still flash fire, and a commanding carriage. The town is hung with wreaths and flags; in the shops nothing but WAGNER portraits, busts, medals of all sorts and sizes, WAGNER'S works, WAGNER'S Life and Genius, and an immense German and French literature on the Niebelungen Saga.

407. WAGNER WORSHIP.

The performance of the *Rheingold* will live long in my memory, as the extreme realisation of weird beauty steeped

in atmosphere such as may be in some other planet, flushed with sunset or moonrise. This music is like a land of dreams, into which the spirit breaks at times, and, hurrying back a million of years, discovers, on the surface of far-off seas, or dim caverns, the light that has long since gone out for ever. The elemental prelude of deep and slumbrous sound wafts us away from all account of time and space of the present. The vast hall, full of silent human beings, has been touched by the magician's wand. All grows dark, and the dim grey-green depths of the Rhine alone become visible. We strain our eyes into the dimness, and are aware of the deep moving of the Rhine water. The three Rhine daughters grow visible, swimming midwater, swimming and singing, guardians of the Rheingold. What unearthly, unhuman, magical, snatches of sweetest song! There is at last realized the creature of legend, the Undine at once more and less than human.

408. THE RHINE GIRLS.

The hideous King of the Undergrounds, or Niebelungen, sits watching these lovely water-maidens—he courts them in vain. The orchestra weaves on its divine Rhine music, without which we almost feel the scene must vanish. The soft cries and unearthly but musical laughter of the Undines, swimming ceaselessly, begin to give us a strange feeling of limited, monotonous life, pointing subtilly to the difference between such natures

409. RHEINGOLD!

and our own. But they, too, are waiting for something. This dim green water is growing oppressive. We feel ourselves immersed in its depths. At first it was a dream scene of exquisite beauty—now it is almost a prison—in another moment we should struggle to be free, but suddenly the *Rheingold* begins to brighten. A shaft of radiance strikes through the water. The Undines scream with joy. The Underground King, Alberich, blinks with astonishment. Then through the whole depth of the Rhine streams an electric light—glowing upon a distant rock—dimmed to softest yellow only by the water. "Rheingold! Rheingold!" a wild shout arises—joy of the Rhine daughters! HAYDN has produced the effect of light in the *Creation* by a great burst of sound, "And there was LIGHT!!" But, sublime as is that one chord on LIGHT, the effect here is far more subtle. We have been kept in dark water for half an hour. The whole system is made to pine and cry out for light. It comes at last—the light of the flashing of the Rheingold! Every fibre in the body quivers with it. It is as oxygen to the lungs. The eye and whole nervous system drink it in. We could shout like children with the Rhine girls over the joy of the Rheingold!

410. SUBTLE ART.

The whole of this water-scene is of indescribable beauty, and without a trace of vulgar pantomimic effect. A lesser man would have made the Rhine water lighter at first. As it is, for some seconds after

the curtain rises we can hardly see anything. Slowly the eye discerns the floating women; but we still follow them chiefly by their voices. Alberich is hardly visible; the music itself seems to keep down the light; but then the dawn of splendour of the Rheingold! That explains all; the effect is consummate. WAGNER, it is evident, has superintended every detail and every *nuance*. I can understand now his bursting into tears when the Rhine ladies refused to enter the new invisible machines which were to float them about in mid-water.

411. PLOT.

I will here briefly allude to the plot of the *Rheingold*. How Alberich, the King of the Undergrounds, renounces the love of the Rhine girls to clutch the gold How he leaves the Rhine dark, and flies with his treasure to his own Underground caverns, there to maltreat his wretched hordes of slaves, and compel them to turn the Rheingold into sumptuous vessels, amongst them a magic helmet and a Ring whose wearer can change himself at will into anything. How the gods meanwhile have been bribing the giants with the promise of the beautiful Freia, their sister, to build them their Walhalla Palace. How the giants on the completion of the palace claim Freia, and only give her up upon the gods extorting the Rheingold from Alberich and his undergrounds and paying it over to the monstrous architects. How at last the gods, with Freia, go over the Rainbow Bridge into the Walhalla to the sound of

heavenly music, whilst upon the ambrosial air comes from afar the fitful wail of the Rhine Daughters:—

"Rheingold!
Clear and pure,
Show thy glory in the depths,
There alone is Truth and Trust,
False and faithless all above,
Who rejoice . . . . . !"

All this the reader may possibly be familiar with. To dwell upon each scene is here impossible. I wish to notice the first employment of what I have called, in *Music and Morals* the Colour Art of the Future. The eye is prepared for the lurid and horrible interior of the Niebelungen Caves, where the scourged slaves ply, amid shrieks, the ceaseless hammer—by white clouds of steam shot with red light. This is used, with varying intensities, to never pausing music, simply as a sensuous appeal to the eye, and its effect is a pyschological marvel. All the burden of horror and pain is in the surging, hissing, crimson cloud. It is the terrible bridge over which the spectator passes to the realm of Niebelheim, as the gods pass to Walhalla over the rainbow. Steam or any other medium, shot with changing colour, and perhaps accompanied by music—the Colour Symphony—is still to come; its raw elements are present in the sunset, as the raw elements of music are in the sounds of nature, and the cries of birds and beasts. Wagner has perhaps unconsciously flashed the first line of the new Art upon us in the *Rheingold*.

412.
THE COLOUR ART.

Of the spiritual beauty of the "Rainbow scene," which is, pictorially, worthy of TURNER, I can hardly speak. Yet even here the fateful curse that hangs over the Rheingold and all who touch it—here, in the hour of joy and god-like splendour—there is a hint of the final overthrow of the Walhalla and the "Dusk of the Gods." It is to be seen in the crimson Niebelheim light upon the mighty ramparts and towers—a light that gives a sober tinge even to the rainbow—it is to be heard in the haunting cry of the Rhine daughters over their lost treasure, which makes even the happy gods pause on the threshold of Walhalla. It is felt in the mingled undertones of the orchestra, breaking forth at last into the strong closing bars of the *Rheingold*. A terrible firmness of purpose, beyond the control even of the gods themselves, is urging forward the course of all things in heaven and earth; none may go back, none may look behind. The old *Anangke* —or Necessity—of the Greeks is at the bottom of all, and seems to say alike to the Rhine daughters, the dwarfs, the giants, and the gods, "Go forward; the end must come; what will be, will be."

413. THE RAINBOW SCENE.

The *Rheingold* lasts for two hours and a half at a stretch, during which time there is no pause in the music, but there is also no sign of fatigue in the audience who sit in rapt attention to the close.

II.—*Walküre.*

With the *Walküre,* or Warrior Daughters of God Wotan (Wodin), begin the famous three days to which the *Rhein-*

414. *gold,* described in my last, was the introduction.

ENTER THE KING AND WAGNER. The God Wotan in his earthly wanderings became the father by a mortal woman of Siegmund and Sieglinde. Upon the interest of one of the Walküre, Brünnhilde, in this couple, and her final sacrifice of Virgin deity in their cause, this next drama in three acts turns. Let us enter the theatre about five o'clock. A *fanfare* of trumpets outside gives the signal. The lights are lowered. In the twilight the whole assembly seems aware that WAGNER and the King are approaching. In the Royal box I see the two stand for a moment like dark shadows, the King bowing once to the people amid breathless silence, broken only by the woe-burdened chords and unquiet distant thunderings of the orchestra.

The curtain rises. A wild cabin, into which out of the storm enters Siegmund—throws himself, dead with fatigue,

415. before a rude fire, and sleeps. In steals Sieg-

SIEGMUND AND SIEGLINDE. linde, his sister, the forced wife of Hunding, a savage hunter. Thus brother and sister, separated from the cradle, meet unknown to each other. We are at once completely outside all conventional moralities—

in an age and faerie sphere in which human passion has to be contemplated apart from all civilised conditions. We thus follow breathlessly, without shock, the inexorable development of the various phases of recognition, self-abandonment, confession, and ecstasy which follow. The wild music flowing to the wild life of the wandering Siegmund, as he pours it all out to his new friend and protectress, who revives him with a cooling draught, consoles him, and already claims him as her deliverer; the entrance of Hunding; the fight between him and Siegmund, which is to take place on the morrow; the sleeping potion administered to him by Sieglinde, and the long scene at night, where she steals out, all in white, to Siegmund—these are graphic and awe-inspiring situations; the moon spreads through the room, and the fire dies, and through the open door are seen the fair, moon-lit woods, and all is peace—this the reader must imagine for himself. Nothing more searching in delineation of passion was ever conceived than this scene between lovers about to risk all—with fate overhanging them, and hearts filled alternately with the pain of dread forebodings and an inextinguishable love.

As the last spark on the hearth dies, the music becomes flowing and deep, like a broadening river. A strange red light—the light of Wotan—falls on the giant oak-tree, showing the hilt of a sword plunged in there by a mysterious stranger. He who could draw it should alone

free Sieglinde from her brutal husband. Siegmund rises and draws it, amidst a great burst of triumphant sound. This, on the morrow, should give him victory over the coarse Hunding, for the sword is Wotan's own, hidden there for his son Siegmund. The deep wealth of sound upon which the lovers are now buoyed up as they fall into each other's arms is like the mingling of oceans and rivers and clouds; and the strong, terrible chords, to which the curtain again falls, are as the might of resistless love, hurrying to its fateful close.

The second act reveals to us the wild Brünnhilde—War Walküre. With spear in hand she scales the rocks; the clouds are about her; she shouts to her com-

416. BRÜNNHILDE'S MISSION.

panions, and her voice mingles with the winds. As she mounts each crag her notes rise higher and higher—a melody of bewitching, boisterous wildness. How Wotan bids the War Walküre defend his favourite Siegmund in the coming duel with Hunding; how Fricka, his jealous wife, burns for the death of Siegmund, the mortal bastard; how the god gives in weakly, and bids Brünnhilde destroy him; how Brünnhilde, a dear, good creature, protests, and goes at last to her mission, clad in mail and scarlet, with a heavy heart—must be told in few words. From this moment to the end of the act the excitement, without pause, goes on, changing in form, but ever increasing. Now the flying lovers rush on to the rocky stage; the sound of Hun-

ding's horn, the cry of his dogs, is in their ears; then all is again ecstasy; until Sieglinde breaks out in a strange scene of passionate remorse at having been the wife of an unloved man. Her intense love for Siegmund makes her past life seem too vile. But hark!—and the sound of dogs and horns, the rushing of wind and crashing of branches, swells in the orchestra, and Sieglinde faints, and is laid resting on a rock. Then a passage of unspeakable solemnity occurs with the re-entrance of Brünnhilde. She stands before Siegmund —come on her fateful errand—and the music grows sweet and solemn, with the majestic Wotan "motif"; she tells the hero that whoever looks on her must shortly die; that she takes the warrior to Walhalla, but that he must fall in fight. Measured and slow as fate, yet strangely full of tenderness, is her terrible message. With knightly calm he listens, and at last, with a burst of love which shakes Brünnhilde's own heart, he declares that he will kill himself and his beloved, but they shall not be divided. The Walküre, at last overcome, and faithless to Wotan's command, promises protection.

But the orchestra resumes the stormy music; the battle hour approaches; clouds hurry restlessly through the sky;

417. THE FIGHT.

Hunding is close at hand amongst the high crags yonder. With a burning kiss the hero leaves Sieglinde, and hurries to meet the foe. She rises, all is wild, and the air grows stormy and dark around

her; she calls Siegmund wildly, and rushes forward; but too late, she never sees him alive again. On the topmost rocks we hear, behind the clouds, the warriors shouting and the arms clashing. It is a fearful moment, and the orchestra is taxed to the uttermost. The clouds part for a moment only—the bright Brünnhilde is seen floating above her hero, clad in shining steel and crimson. In vain! Wotan himself appears, and shatters Siegmund's magic sword with his spear. The hero is slain. The clouds now roll aside; in terrible red smoke and blinding light, the angry god stands out. At a word Hunding, the coarse hunter, falls dead before him; but the god turns upon poor Brünnhilde, and, as the curtain falls, curses her for her disobedience.

The storm music and the thunder roll away; and, after a tension probably unexampled in dramatic art, we issue forth into the now cool and darkened air, eighteen hundred people disperse upon the hill and roadside, and discuss for an hour in the temporary *cafés* their experiences. Liszt I found with his daughter, Madame Wagner, and other ladies, chatting to a group. The prince and poet of the Romantic School has a long cigar in his mouth and a large bock of beer in his hand. People hurry up and are introduced at times—he receives all cordially with "Schön! Schön!" I remember that Wagner was loudly called for at the end of the second act, but did not appear. But, oddly enough, before the last

418. IN THE CAFÉ.

act, when the theatre was half empty, he came on the stage and bowed, and was cheered wildly.

The last act opens with a scenic effect which it was anticipated would tax any theatre to render adequately. The

419. THE WALKÜRE CHORUS.

chorus of the Walküre on the rocks, half hidden with clouds, as they wait for Brünnhilde, their Amazon sister, unconscious of her catastrophe, is quite unparalleled in its wild and spontaneous splendour. The cries and shouts are hurled from rock to rock with waving of arms and clashing of spears and shields. The troubled sky is in ceaseless motion, the air is filled with boisterous elemental mirth, and the bursting cries of unbridled animal spirits are, somehow, all woven into a kind of chorus, resting upon such an ocean of orchestral sound as has certainly never before been heard or conceived by mortals. Amid thunder and flashes Brünnhilde, dragging poor rescued Sieglinde, now suddenly appears on the stage, and what follows must be merely summarised. The despair of Sieglinde; the devotion of the tender, reckless Brünnhilde, inconceivably touching symbol of the devotion which good women are capable of for each other; the wild recrudescence of joy which seizes Sieglinde when Brünnhilde hands to her, with fervid song, the fragments of Siegmund's magic sword—all that is left of him now, yet enough for vengeance, enough to win the Rheingold from the Giant Fafner, enough for the hero Sieglinde is about to bear,

She is then hurried away to safety, and, with the appropriate recurring strains in the orchestra, the God Wotan at last approaches.

The favourite Walküre, deprived of her arms, comes forth to learn the doom of her disobedience. Some divine necessity compels her banishment from Walhalla, and infinitely subtle and complex are the music and sentiment which follow. Brünnhilde has been drawn earthwards by human sympathy—she will become whole woman by-and-bye, who has thus stooped to human affection—but earthly love shall destroy her divinity; and, meanwhile, parted for ever from her sisters and her father, who still love her fondly, she shall sleep amid wild and lonely rocks encircled with fire, waiting for the lover who, dauntless, shall find her and wake her there, and make her his earthly bride.

420. THE SLEEP OF THE WALKÜRE.

The flight of the sister Walküre in the storm, with a wild chorus full of despairing screams, is followed by a protracted and inconceivably touching parting between the resigned Brünnhilde and the father, Wotan—whose anger has died away as the sunset sky has slowly faded into deeper and deeper grey. Then, to long drawn out and enchanting melody, Brünnhilde's head sinks on her father's breast, and his mind wanders back to the happy time when she, the War Maiden, his pride, brought new warriors, the boldest and best, to fill the Walhalla courts. The poor Walküre can but sob that

she has loved her father Wotan and Walhalla, and implore him, if she is to become a mortal's bride, to surround her rock with fire, to bar her from all but the bravest. It is now almost dark; a faint red light lingers on the supple yet lordly form of Brünnhilde. A strange swoon seems to have already seized her; the god lays her gently prostrate on the rock, then waves her into her long sleep. Then, retiring suddenly to the back of the stage, he calls for the Fire God, Loge; a burst of fire breaks out and runs round the stage; in another moment the whole background is an immense wall of rose-coloured flame, which gradually creeps round the rock. To the most enchanting and dream-like music of silver bells, harps, and flutes, with an under-current of bass strings, the sleep of the Walküre begins; the god scales the rocks, stands for a moment in the midst of the fire, then passes through it out of sight, as the curtain falls to the silver, peaceful, unearthly cadences, repeated again and again, swelling and falling, and ceasing at last leaving the heart, after so much fierce storm, at rest.

III.—*Siegfried.*

421. WAGNER'S RECITATIVE.

The grotesque music given to both Mime and Alberich, like so much of WAGNER'S misunderstood recitative, aims, no doubt, at following the inflections of the human voice as it is affected often by very commonplace moods, as well as by the meaner

impulses of arrogance, vexation, anger, and spite. What we lose in musical charm we gain in a certain ingenious sense of reality. I think the power of WAGNER, the solidity of his work, largely turns upon this. He is never afraid of length, of silence, even of dulness, caused by protracted or delayed action. Like DE BALZAC, he knew well how to work up slowly and surely to a consummate effect, and his effect never hangs fire, nor is it ever liable to an anticlimax, that bane of second-rate artists.

422. MIME WORKS.

A cavern rocky—somewhere deep in a forest—lies before us; and Mime the misshapen thing—fit brother of Alberich, the lord of Niebelheim, or fog-land, works away at a forge to make a sword fit for—who? In he comes, the wild, robust child of the forest—reminding me of the first appearance of that other wild, robust creation Parsifal. In he comes, driving a fierce brown bear bridled in sport. Mime the dwarf shrinks back—Mime, who has been foster-father to this Siegfried, son of Sieglinde and Siegmund. He has brought him up in ignorance of his parentage, knowing well the dash of Deity in his blood, and knowing also that could the fragments of the magic sword, given up by Sieglinde as her most precious legacy, be somehow welded together again, Siegfried, her son, would be able to wield it with resistless might and slay the dragon Fafner who keeps the gold.

This accursed gold-heap—eternal symbol of ill-gotten

wealth and the curse of it—forms the magic centre around which all the actors in this cycle of dramas consciously or unconsciously move.

423. MIME AND SIEGFRIED

The character-contrast between Mime the mean, double-dealing, cringing, cowardly creature who hopes to use the young hero for his purposes, and Siegfried the free, noble, daring youth, with a presentiment of great destinies before him, both are drawn in large outline. Great distinction of type, great simplicity of conception and straightforwardness of execution; the master is sure of his touches and lays them on with a free bold hand. Siegfried throughout revolts against Mime—yet Mime holds secrets which he burns to know. Who were his father and mother? What means his wild, secluded, lonely life? He cannot taste broth at Mime's hands without disgust, he cannot talk with him without quarrelling, he can hardly bear the sight of him, will not believe that Mime is his father at all; wants a sword that he cannot break; will have the fragments of the magic sword "Nothung" welded; shatters Mime's welding of them, proceeds to weld them himself.

424. THE WELDING OF THE SWORD.

The welding of Nothung, hammer on anvil in the gloomy cavern, with the regular puffing and blowing of the rude bellows—the protracted song—most tuneful, almost conventional in form—broken off and resumed, and itself, as it were, welded with

every blow into the sword Nothung, produces a very singular and "seizing" effect. The actors appear to be entirely lost in their business—the audience have come upon a forge in a very rocky forest cave—difficult work is going on, to very long-winded accompaniment, full of varied realistic detail. If we want to see the work put through we must stop; if not, we may go. But the work cannot be hastened—the welding of that sword is the turning-point of the drama—the wielding of it secures the gold, the ring, and the helmet; and the spell of these secures Brünnhilde for Siegfried—the transfer of these treasures wrecks Brünnhilde and brings on the final catastrophe. The action is delayed, but the welding is thorough, and when with a mighty stroke the anvil is cloven in twain, we know that the young hero is at last fitted with an irresistible weapon, and that the drama has moved through one of its most critical and decisive stages.

425. THE DRAGON'S CAVE.

The Dragon's Cave—the summer woods—the coming together of the various people interested in the gold—these are the elements of the next act. There is the Wanderer, the god Wotan in disguise, who originally stole the gold from Alberich, who in his turn had filched it from the Rhine girls, and who now thinks he may get it back somehow from Fafner the giant. Fafner, in the form of a great dragon, lies on it day and night. There is Alberich, the first robber, hovering about

the Neid-hole, or cavern, in the hope of getting back the treasure; there is Mime, who about this time makes sure of the prize in his own mind, as he fancies Siegfried is in his power, and proposes to employ him to kill Fafner. Then he will poison him with a draught, and clutch both magic sword and treasure.

All these old-world scamps meet and talk and eye each other, and plot and ask riddles and give hints. Siegfried, meanwhile, holds the key of the great enigma—

426. SIEGFRIED APART.

stands completely apart—alone in his strength, simplicity, and might, the holder and wielder of the sword Nothung—with deep scorn in his heart for the pitiful and mean schemers and quacks by whom he is surrounded, and with an innate perception, born of communing with nature, of the snares they are laying for him.

The grimness and hideousness of the cavern and the Worm-dragon seem to resume the spirit of all the unlovely wickedness and avarice of Siegfried's rivals. The

427. MISE-EN-SCÈNE.

glorious sunshine, the glowing foliage of the woodlands, the song of wild birds, symbolize the spirit whilst providing a *mise-en-scène* for the valour, the victory, and the love-musings of the young hero.

The Dragon is no doubt the weak point. I believe Mr.

DANNREUTHER gave three hundred pounds for him in London, and brought him over with the utmost care. His tail, I am told, was worked by one man inside him, and his jaws by another; but somehow he could not be got to show fight at the right time. He was a poor beast; the steam came out of his mouth too late; his tail stuck half-way on the wag, and he had evidently some difficulty in opening his jaws. He was easily slain, and rolled over conveniently enough, leaving the treasure in the hands of Siegfried.

428. A SORRY DRAGON.

Otherwise the weirdness of the whole scene was indescribable. That enchanting summer land—that delicious burst of woodland melody—that strong contrast between the blazing sheen of emerald and amber-lighted trees and the gloomy cavern hard by—that sudden poetic, trance-like pause, full of wild birds and love dreams, just before the sharp attack on the Dragon, followed by the repulsive murder of Mime, and the resumption of the same bright love dream immediately afterwards: this can never fail to impress the dullest sensibility with its extreme beauty. VOGEL'S Siegfried, as an impersonation, was on a level with MATERNA'S Brünnhilde. The music to which the curtain falls on the second act, as Siegfried, wild with anticipation, follows the bird that flies before him singing, and showing him the way to Brünnhilde, who lies on her fire-girt rock waiting for him—that ocean of summer

429. BIRD MUSIC IN SUMMER LAND.

woodland music upon which a hero's spirit passes into the consciousness of first love—is beyond these halting words.

The contrasts which follow are dramatically admirable. Old Wotan's gloomy conference with Erda, the mystic partner of his old-world love, in which he takes stock of the situation, views with mixed feelings the rise and progress of Siegfried, and with feelings still more mixed the decay of his own power and the approaching downfall of Walhalla; then his dubious colloquy with Siegfried, who suddenly confronts him on his way to the fire-girt rock; his mingled pride and dignity, together with his growing sense of being powerless to hinder the consummation of Brünnhilde's union with the upstart demi-semi-god;—follow scene after scene with cumulative effect. The striking episode in which Siegfried breaks the old god's spear, when it is thrust between him and the unknown object of his passion; and finally the terrific ocean of crimson flame through which the hero bursts fearlessly to the side of the sleeping Walküre—truly these be massive and monumental conceptions! Like great world-types they unroll themselves before us in so many magical scenes of unsurpassed, dramatic and daring grandeur.

430. CONTRASTS.

I suppose it will be generally allowed that WAGNER is the greatest master of love duets that ever wedded words to music. The absorbing picture of love and jealousy in

Lohengrin, of pure and impure love subtly contrasted in *Tannhäuser* — passion of love and death in *Tristan and Isolde,* the unique passages between Parsifal and Kundry—passion essentially primeval touched with a certain divine intensity as is fit in demi-gods —like Siegfried and Brünnhilde—these are essential manifestations of dramatic force and profound intention, beside which even the love passages in GOUNOD'S *Faust and Marguerite* seem like mere child's play.

431. LOVE DUETS.

The moment has arrived. The majestic Brünnhilde wakes with all her divine war-maiden instincts still upon her; confronts the hero who is to win her, at first with terror; realises slowly, painfully, then irresistibly and ecstatically, the might of human passion, and surrenders the old heroism of a crumbling Walhalla, and the dreams of god-like power and independence, at the burning touch of human love. Better that touch of real life than all the flimsy visions of a decaying mythology—nobler the sincerity of human feeling, that seizes its object and concentrates its sympathies, than the vague, restless wanderings of old reprobates like Wotan, or the war-lust of fiery, death-hungry Walküre such as Brünnhilde was —such as the bride Walküre will never be again. Hear her.

432. THE SURRENDER.

"O Siegfried!
Lightener—world's delight—
Life on earth—
And laughing lord,
Leave, ah! leave me!"

And Siegfried but replies:

"Awaken Brünnhilde!
Waken thou maid!
Live to me, laugh to me,
Sweetest delight:
Be mine! be mine!"

No translation seems to give an adequate vigour or do justice to the strength and passion of the dialogue, which ends in a long pæan of triumph as the curtain falls and Siegfried takes his prize.

Hail thou Sun
That shinest around me;
Hail thou morn
From out the dark;
Hail thou world
That wakes Brünnhilde.
She wakes! she lives!
She laugheth back
My splendid star,
My Brünnhilde's glow.
Mine ever mine,
All of her mine
And only mine,

(*Brünnhilde throws herself into Siegfried's arms.*)

Come, life of me!
Thou light of love!
Thou laughing Death!

IV.—The Götterdämmerung.

The *Niebelung's Ring* closes with the "Dusk of the Gods." The truly prodigious way in which all the leading subjects
433. are repeated, inverted and worked up in the
THE VISION OF THE NORNS. music of this last colossal drama cannot be described. The Wotan Melody—perhaps the finest—blown on trumpets outside the theatre, rang out far over hill and dale, and floated like an ominous blast to the town below. At the familiar sound the people flock to their seats in the theatre. The first melodies of the *Rheingold* break from the orchestra, and the Norns or Fates are seen weaving the last of their ropes; they see as they weave the story of Siegfried and Brünnhilde—they see the gods growing old—they trace the history of Wotan's earth love—they start with horror as they at last see the flames rising in a vision round Walhalla. The rope breaks; the Norns vanish.

The day dawns to a clear subject worked in skilful counterpoint, and the farewell scene between Brünnhilde
434. and her new mate, Siegfried, as he parts from
SIEGFRIED LEAVES BRUNNHILDE. her to seek knightly adventures, now absorbs us. Her sorrow at parting is almost drowned by her feeling of pride in him and the thought of glorious war; and here the Walküre nature breaks out in her. She would fain follow him, but this may not be; and as she is

about to be left again on her fire-girt rock, she scales one height after another, shouting a wild and ecstatic adieu to the hero, who is heard galloping away to a strange mixture of Rhine music and a peculiar, joyous, scampering subject, which, together with his horn-blast, always heralds his coming and going.

435. THE HOUSE OF HAGEN.

But the curse of the Gold is upon him, and death, and worse than death, is brewing for him in the house of Hagen, hateful bastard son of Dwarf Alberich, by a mortal woman. Hagen lives with his brother on Rhine-banks, when Siegfried, as a wandering knight, appears at his halls. Hagen, Ghunter, the brother, and the fair sister, Gutrune, are sitting together. Hagen, the instrument of Alberich, is wholly bent on getting back the Rheingold. He tells Ghunter of the sleeping Brünnhilde, who can alone be approached by Siegfried, and inflames his desire to seize her. At this moment Siegfried's horn is heard; he enters, and the plot thickens. He is soon given a drink which makes him forget every woman he has known before, even poor Brünnhilde. Siegfried, thus bewitched, then proceeds to fall in love with Gutrune, and listens to the tale of Brünnhilde on the flame-girt rock with astonishment, swears friendship to Ghunter, and undertakes to assume his friend's shape by magic, cross the flames, seize his own Brünnhilde, and hand her over to Ghunter.

From this moment the horrible plot is harrowing in the extreme. No art, no music, no magic can reconcile us to what follows; the horror is piled up. The scene changes. Brünnhilde waits on her rock; hears a horse and Siegfried's horn, but with something jarring and false about it; but she heeds not that, he returns! The fire is crossed, a warrior appears on the height. She flies to throw herself into his arms—the form of Ghunter is before her! How he coolly hands her over to the real Ghunter, who is waiting; her horror and bewildering despair; his callous indifference and complete absence of all memory of her, which she cannot revive in him; the meeting of the two couples, Brünnhilde and Ghunter with Siegfried and his new bride, Gutrune; the terrible scene between Brünnhilde and Siegfried before the household and retainers of Hagen, in which she declares Gutrune's husband to be hers; the jealous frenzy of Ghunter and the death of Siegfried, which is now plotted and presently carried out by stabbing in the back—all this it is impossible here to do more than summarise.

436. CAPTURE OF BRÜNNHILDE.

A brief and exquisite episode between the Rhine-daughters and Siegfried, chiefly a treble trio by the floating nymphs of sustained and enchanting beauty, relieves the pressure of horror we have just been going through from the despair and fury of Brünnhilde, whose wild cries and heart-rending gestures can never be forgotten.

Then comes, at last, the beginning of the end. Siegfried, seated with Hagen, Ghunter, and warriors, drinks of a cup which restores his memory, and begins to relate his past life; as he advances in his narrative, full of wondrous declamation and music, he at length nears the Brünnhilde episode; snatches of the Walküre and the fire-sleep music break out; a strange fervour seizes him; he tells of the embrace on the rock, and his mind begins to reel with sudden perplexity. But it is enough! At this point Hagen stabs him in the back. As he dies his thoughts grow clear. Brünnhilde's love returns—he sees but her, dreams of her in his dying swoon; although she is not present—she, his first, last love, fills his latest consciousness.

437. THE MURDER.

The struggle for the Ring which follows, the suicide of Ghunter, the sudden apparition of Brünnhilde, introduce the last episode of striking beauty. The scenery from this point becomes indescribable. The moon is full upon the ruffled Rhine-waters; the tall funeral tapers flash on the steel helms of the retainers; the body of Siegfried, clad in mail, lies in the middle of the stage; and the stately form of the Walküre is isolated by his side, as the crowd falls to right and left.

438. THE END.

Whilst an immense funeral pyre is being built up in the background beside the Rhine-waters, Brünnhilde makes her last reconciliation with Siegfried. As she gazes on his pallid face she reads that dying recognition. She under-

stands, at last, the magic spell that was on him. Her love towers above everything else—she stands there the embodiment of the sublime trust in love beyond sight, that believes and lasts out against all adverse shocks, and is faithful even unto death. She has known divine might in the halls of Walhalla, she has had the power of the Ring and the power of Gold, and enjoyed all fame of war and victory, and now, with her latest breath, comes solemnly forth what is the conclusion of the whole drama, "Blessedness, through joy and sorrow, comes to us from Love unquenchable alone!"

With this she moves in the moonlight towards the Rhine. She draws the Ring of the Rheingold—the cause of such grief and manifold pain—from the hero's finger, and flings it back into the Rhine, from whence at the commencement it was snatched by Alberich.

The Walküre's black war-horse has been brought to her; she waves high a flaming torch, and hurls it upon the bier; the fire rises in lurid columns. She mounts her steed and leaps into the flames.

At that moment, in the awful glow of the flaming pyre, the waters, still flashing with moonlight in the background, begin to swell and advance, and the Rhine-daughters, singing the wildest Rhine music, are seen floating to and fro. Beyond a ruddier light broadens, until the distant sky discloses the courts of the Walhalla in flames. With a crash in the foreground the house of Hagen falls; and whilst the mighty conflagration flares up in the distance,

the Rhine-waters, to rushing music, advance and submerge the whole of the stage.

439. A SPEECH BY WAGNER.

Thus, with a scene of unequalled dramatic splendour, ends the fourth and last immense drama of the *Niebelung's Ring*. This is not the place for fuller criticism of such a work. At the close of it the pent-up enthusiasm of the public rose to a pitch of frenzy. They stood up, and, turning to the Royal box, which WAGNER had left, shouted to the King, who remained seated and bowed graciously. The plaudits continuing, His Majesty motioned to the stage. The people turned, and in a moment WAGNER, dressed in plain black, with his hat in one hand, stepped out from the middle of the curtain, and stood motionless with his grey head uncovered until repeated cries of "Sit down!" "Sit down!" and "Hush!" had calmed the assembly. WAGNER then spoke very quietly, and I regret that not hearing him quite distinctly at moments I am unable to render *verbatim* a speech which has doubtless been elsewhere recorded. I understood him to say he had taken many years in preparing this work; that he had presented a Saga of the Niebelung in the belief that it dealt with subjects peculiarly congenial to the Germanic races; that a new and national development of the drama was now within their reach; he believed that they had been satisfied with what they had listened to, so that it had been to the many assembled there a real

Festspiel. He then thanked the King for his support and encouragement; and, the curtain being suddenly lifted, all the crowd of musicians and actors who had taken part in the Festival stood ranged, and WAGNER, turning round, thanked them in the warmest terms for their devotion and assistance.

So ended the first great Wagner Festival, held at Bayreuth in 1876.

. . . . .

As some people seem to have considerable difficulty in mastering the plot of the *Nibelung's Ring,* I venture to offer a rough skeleton account of it, which may profitably be studied before or after witnessing the four dramas.

I.

RHEINGOLD.

SCENE I.—The sun irradiating the depths of the river, becomes in the myth—*mythos,* I ought to say—a concrete treasure—Rhinegold. It has marvellous properties, and if stolen and forged into a ring, guides its owner to all the hidden gold-mines of the earth. But he who owns the gold must renounce love. Three Rhine girls guard the gold. Alberich, King of the Undergrounds, a hideous dwarf, makes love to the Under-water girls of the Rhine, is rejected, renounces love, but clutches the gold, and makes off with it to Nibelheim—fog-land—his underground caves.

SCENE II. Wotan, King of Gods, tired of love, has employed giants to build him a majestic palace, and offered them Freia, Goddess of Love, as payment. The other gods refuse to part with Freia when the palace is done, and Wotan has nothing left which the giants will take instead. The clever fire-god Loge hears of the Rhine gold, now in Alberich's possession. Offers it to the giants. Offer accepted, and Loge and Wotan go off to steal it.

SCENE III.—Loge and Wotan enter Nibelheim. Alberich displays the

gold; also a cap, which enables the wearer to assume any form. At Loge's suggestion, he becomes a toad, just for fun, is captured, and the ring and all his wealth passes over to Wotan, but not before the ring is cursed by Alberich, and destined henceforth to bring misery and disaster to its owner.

SCENE IV.—The gold and fatal ring are got rid of to the giants, who take the whole in payment; Freia, who gives youth and joy to the gods, is released, and the gods walk processionally into their new palace, over a beautiful rainbow bridge. Curtain falls.

II.

WALKÜRE.

SCENE I.—Opens as Siegmund, a son of earth-woman by god Wotan, staggers into a log hut, breathless, and falls prostrate with fatigue. Flying from his enemies, he has found shelter—but where? In Hunding's hut. Enter Sieglinde, daughter of earth-woman by god Wotan; brother and sister, unknown to each other, converse. Hunding enters, and all three converse The situation dawns on them, and Hunding, respecting his guest, recognises his foe, and summons him to mortal combat on the morrow. That night, in a stolen interview, Sieglinde and Siegmund arrange matters; a magic sword left sticking in a big tree by Wotan, is claimed by Siegmund and drawn forth, that being the only provision made by the god for his gallant offspring. The lovers escape together.

SCENE II.—Father Wotan parleys with the war maidens anent the coming duel of Siegmund with Hunding. Father Wotan parleys with his wife Fricka on the same subject. Fricka is mad for the death of the irregular son Siegmund. Wotan, with bleeding heart, at last yields, and Walküre Brünnhilde has commission to get him well slain in the fight. Warlike, but tender, Brünnhilde appears to Siegmund, and tells him of his fate, but is melted at the spectacle of the despairing lovers, and goes over in disobedience to their cause, protects the hero in the duel, but is foiled by Wotan, who comes in as a most detestable *deus ex machinâ*, and gets his own son killed after all. Brünnhilde takes care of poor Sieglinde about to become the mother of Siegfried, and gives her the fragments of the magic sword, only shattered by the might of Wotan. Brünnhilde, for her disobedience, loses her divinity, and is laid to sleep on a fire-encompassed rock. Having stooped to love, she is now handed over to the love of a mortal, only the lover must be brave, and will have to get through the fire and claim her, which brings us to the threshold of the third drama *Siegfried.*

III.

SIEGFRIED

SCENE I.—Sieglinde has died giving birth to Siegfried. Mime (Alberich's deformed brother), who lives in a wood, has sheltered her, and, knowing of the secret of the hero she has given birth to, his demi-godhood, and the invincible sword he is to wield, the fragments of which are in Mime's possession, the shrewd dwarf brings him up with care, and intends to make him by-and-by slay Fafner, the giant, who, in the disguise of a dragon, keeps the gold stolen for the giants by the gods from Alberich. The first scene concludes with the successful mending of the broken sword by the combined efforts of Siegfried, now grown to manhood, and his foster-father, Mime.

SCENE II.—All parties interested are now found lurking about the hole where Fafner watches the gold. The old scapegrace of a god Wotan comes prowling about, partly curious to see his grandson, Siegfried, who is to wield the magic sword—partly with his eye on the gold. Alberich turns up at the hole watching the main chance, and ready to clutch at his lost treasure. Mime makes sure of it when Siegfried has killed the dragon. He means to bring him a sleep-drink, slay him, and get the gold. Presently the dragon is slain. Mime offers the drink; Siegfried sees through him, and slays him too. Having by chance put his finger, stained with dragon's blood, to his lips, he suddenly understands the cry of the birds in the branches. One bird sings out loud and clear, and tells of the maid who lies, fire-surrounded, on a rock. Siegfried follows the magic bird, who is to lead him to Brünnhilde.

SCENE III.—On his way he meets Wotan, who opposes his spear, to test his descendant's prowess and power. Siegfried breaks it with his magic sword, and with it scatters the might of Walhalla. He reaches the fire-rock bursts through the flames, and claims Brünnhilde as his bride.

IV.

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG.

Siegfried having left Brünnhilde in search of knightly adventure, comes to the Rhine castle of Hagen. There he is drugged with a magic potion by Hagen's daughter, Gutrune, who wants to marry him. Said potion causes him to forget his love for Brünnhilde and fall in love with Gutrune. He

now promises to go with her brother, Gunther, and capture Brünnhilde on her fire-surrounded rock and hand her over to Gunther. Arrives with him, seizes Brünnhilde, and hands her over. The frightful situation is then worked out in Hagen's castle by the Rhine. Siegfried appears as Gutrune's lover, Gunther as Brünnhilde's; they all four meet. Brünnhilde is puzzled, and falls into despair at not being recognised by Siegfried, who is under a spell. In his life-time the harrowing mystery is never solved, but before his assassination by Hagen he partially recovers his memory. Whilst reciting the story of his life he is suddenly stabbed. Brünnhilde then comes on the scene to find him dead; but the truth that he has been bewitched dawns upon her. She proclaims him tender and true in death. They heap up logs; he is hoisted on to the pile, but not before Brünnhilde has taken the fatal ring from the hero's finger, and cast it back into the Rhine. The Rhine girls appear on the surface singing. The air darkens, the flames rise. Brünnhilde's war horse is led out for the last time; horse and Walküre leap into the flames. The Rhine swells up to the foot-lights, washing over everything, and extinguishing the funeral pile; and the house of Hagen—pillars, doors, and lintel—falls into ruin.

VII.

INTERLUDE

ON TANNHAUSSER AND LOHENGRIN.

THE overture to *Tannhäuser* and the prelude to *Lohengrin* were the first fragments of WAGNER which arrested seriously the attention of people in England about 1860, and led some of us to think that perhaps he might have a future before him. The French had already made up their minds that he had none, and M. FÉTIS, in his great *Dictionnaire des Musiciens*, had boldly written as late as 1866: "To-day the transient curiosity about WAGNER is satisfied; indifference has come, and the so-called music of the future is already a thing of the past."

440. WAGNER'S MUSIC, 1860.

It is quite surprising how little even good musicians, who studied WAGNER'S scores and tried over the arrangements

à quatre mains suspected the real character of a great deal of his music. I distinctly recollect one of the best musicians in England declaring, about 1859, that although the beginning and end of the *Tannhäuser* overture were admirable, there seemed to him a good deal of chaos about the middle; and chaos it undoubtedly sounded as it used in those days to be played in England. The secret of subduing the strings and playing the high notes in tune *pp*, thus striking the elastic balance of the whole work, allowing no part to drop, but realising the grand unity and true subordination of each part to the whole—these things were but slowly learned. In WAGNER's music it is not sufficient to play the notes, or even attend to the *p*'s and *f*'s; each musician must understand the mind of the composer—feel his intention, and discover the secret of the special part which he has to play in the whole. The Wagnerian orchestra is not a machine; it is a living organism.

441. THE DRAMAS PLACED.

The *Tannhäuser* and the *Lohengrin* are the two first of the legendary dramas which serve to illustrate the Christian chivalry and religious aspirations of the Middle Ages, in conflict on the one side with the narrow ideals of Catholicism, and on the other with the free instincts of human nature. *Parsifal* forms with them a great Trilogy of Christian legends, as the *Ring of the Niebelungen* forms a Tetralogy of Pagan Rhine and Norse legends. Both series of sacred and profane myths in the

hands of WAGNER, whilst striking the great key-notes of Paganism and Catholicism, become the fitting and appropriate vehicles for the display of the ever-recurrent struggles of the human heart—now in the grip of inexorable fate—now passion-tossed, at war with itself and with time—soothed with spaces of calm—flattered with the dream of ineffable joys—filled with sublime hopes; and content at last with far-off glimpses of God.

442. IDEAL TYPES.

But in these dramas all is vast and elemental. The feelings are mightier and more intense than anything on earth; the mould of the characters is colossal. All that is transitory, personal, accidental in love, joy, revenge, despair, seems to have dropped away as we gaze at the rapture of Elsa or the despair of Tannhäuser. We are face to face with the unalterable types of human Tragedy; each phase as it passes resumes the whole of what is true and always true—essentially the same in the inmost fibre of every soul, amidst every local change of time and circumstance.

This representative character lifts Wagnerian drama—in conception, at least—to a level with that of SHAKSPERE'S highest flight. I do not compare the two as writers. SHAKSPERE had only the stage to think of, WAGNER wrote with reference to music, and, although sublime in parts, his literary work is very uneven, but, couched in the language of myth and metaphor, it is intensely real, and has that

one quality of all great work, it appeals to what does not change in the heart of man as the ages roll on—"it speaks to time and to Eternity."

VIII.

"TANNHÄUSER" AND "LOHENGRIN."

THE drama of *Tannhäuser* may be said to have burst upon WAGNER with the force of an imperious inspiration. He had been laying siege to the oracle in the *Flying Dutchman* and *Rienzi,* but the answer was uncertain and confused. Essentially a man of his age, filled with a passionate sympathy with its desires and the prophetic instinct of its unreconciled needs, WAGNER had been restlessly seeking in the complex histories and clear myths of the Past for some adequate arena for the interpretation of the Present. He had long felt that the life problem of the nineteenth century was the reconciliation of the Old and New World Spirits, the harmony of the Secular and Religious life. The problem has apparently been given up as hopeless by the new ideal school of ROSSETTI, MORRIS, and BURNE JONES, who avowedly are dead to the present, and live a dream-life, meditating the eternal Realities of Legend, in an unreal garden of the Palingenesis.

443. USE OF MYTH.

But with them the Art of the Present is used to glorify the Myth of the Past; with WAGNER the Myth of the Past is used to illustrate and enhance the Life of the Present.

444. TENNYSON AND WAGNER.

The nearest approach to WAGNER'S use of the myth is to be found in TENNYSON'S *Idylls of the King* where the simple lines of the old narrative are used to illustrate a wide range of modern thought and feeling; but no oppression of heart is lifted, no problem is even stated, much less solved. In *Tannhäuser* WAGNER has at least seized with unexampled force those two leading thoughts with which our age is struggling: First, *the tremendous empire of the senses;* second, *the immense supremacy of the soul.* And his typical knight, in whom both these fierce currents meet and mingle, illustrates the conspicuous failure of the Roman Christianity to unite both streams into one river of life.

445. DEFECTS OF PROTESTANTISM.

Protestantism, though doubtless more true, with its married clergy and its liberal fees to the secular life, is only more successful because less logical than Romanism. Its profession and practice hardly cohere. The language of the Prayer-book contains still the anathema on the senses—the baptismal service is still the white-washing of appetites not conceived of as natural and right, but as carnal and evil—the Communion Service is still in the spirit and mostly in the very letter of the

Mass. No; our popular or unpopular religion in theory, whatever it may be in practice, can grapple with the Senses alone, but it is by crushing them, and that is the ascetic Romanism. It can grapple with the Soul alone, but it is by isolating it, and that is the mystic Romanism. But how to blend the two without defrauding either, *that* the Church does not teach; it has no theory on the subject, it addresses itself to each side of life separately, it is just where St. Simeon Stylites or St. Benedict left it ages ago. The Romanist or Ritualist is quite right when he says we must go back to those times; with our present theories we must either go backwards or forwards, we cannot stand still.

This is what people really mean when they say so often that we are in a Transition Age. What does the Church do? In theory she is simply ascetic and monastic. She prays for the extinction of the senses on her spiritual column, and for the interior development of the spirit in the silence of her cloister, and her activities are confined to works of necessity, charity, and disciplinary sacrifice. This may seem an unfair account of Protestant teaching at least; and so it is, for happily both Protestant and Catholic preachers are more human than their own theories, but their theories remain, and their real antagonism to the *whole* truth of life remains, and it is reflected in the sermons that are commonly heard

446. OUR CHURCH AND HER SERMONS.

and which consist mainly of the STYLITES or the BENEDICT theology.

This is, in a word, the Counsel of Perfection, what Sunday by Sunday we have mainly to listen to in the pulpit:

1. Shun the natural desires.

2. Work out your salvation in meditation and prayer.

3. Labour for the necessaries of life and for the poor and sick.

All good and excellent; but such platitudes shrivel like flies in an oven when confronted with the two burning questions of the day:

1. The Tremendous Empire of the Senses.

2. The Immense Supremacy of the Soul; and how to reconcile them.

WAGNER, I need hardly say, has not answered the question in *Tannhäuser*, but he has placed it before us with admirable force and clearness, and shown us once for all how helpless and incapable the logical, if not infallible, Roman Church is to deal with it.

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The overture to *Tannhäuser* will hold its own by the side of *Fidelio*, *Der Freyschutz*, or the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Larger in mould than the exquisite prelude to *Lohengrin*, it resumes the general atmospheres of the drama with equal breadth and clearness. The whole race of the Ghibellines is summed

447. THE OVERTURE TO TANNHÄUSER.

up in Tannhäuser, indomitable knight—at once the enemy and the spiritual slave of Rome—Pagan, with an inexhaustible passion for the world and all that is in the world, an insatiable thirst for conquest, an ambition put to sleep by the senses for awhile only to break out into wilder life at the magic call of free poetic minstrelsy—Catholic and devotee, by a reaction as tremendous as the storm of human passion which sent him astray—strong, reckless, thorough, and sublime in his despair to the last, when pitying heaven touches into blossom the inexorable staff, and the soul of Tannhäuser finds in heaven with his beloved the peace and mercy denied him by the Vicar of God upon earth. Such is the spirit and such are the atmospheres that seem to roll and unroll before us like clouds of black and purple crimson and opaline fires as we listen to the massive, simple, yet richly-clothed subjects of this dramatic overture.

First leading idea of the overture—the quiet impassioned chant of the Pilgrims steals out of the distance; that chant so subtly woven into the changing fabric of the drama, running through it like a scarlet thread, now associated with the stupid mechanical patter of dull monks, flouting the merry sunshine with their sleepy dirge; now giving expression to Tannhäuser's hungry repentance, like the severe yet pardoning voice of a recording angel; now in the deepening twilight touched with the sad hues of sunset, and lifted away from the unhappy knight like the music of

heaven heard without by one who must not enter; now goading him to the madness of despair with its insulting hope of salvation not for him; and lastly thundered as from heaven's open portals like a great judgment on the Papal blasphemy for cursing what God has not cursed—a shout and clarion of joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Such is the significance of this incomparable motive of the Pilgrims' chant.

The procession draws near, the theme develops and swells, and the procession passes and the chant dies away to give sudden place to the second idea; for now the unhallowed spells of the Venus-berg are upon us, the vapours rise and twist, the sprites and forms of women mingling in wild dances and vanishing amidst the hissing of waterfalls and jets of rose and purple flame, and vistas of green sward between rocks of crystal, and far within, for a moment unveiled and shameless, the fatally fair old-world enchantress, Venus, Satanic rival of Holy Mary. It is but a glimpse; the second subject has been clearly affirmed, and gives place to the third, which is the free element in Tannhäuser's spirit: that immense independence which at one time asserts his will to break through the barrier of the Church and enjoy all earthly pleasures, and at another refuses to be held by the bonds of sense and will back to heaven and grace. Never

448.
THE VENUS-BERG.

a slave—that is the key-note of Tannhäuser's song—the same which he flings at Venus in the first act, and at the assembled knights and ladies in the second. Reckless, defiant even in his despair, bursting alike the bonds of sacerdotalism and sensuality, until he hails his last judgment and spiritual emancipation in death.

449. CLOSE.

The gentle love of Elizabeth, the faithful friendship of Wolfran, are alone absent from the overture; but the one is really as much drowned in religion as the other is absorbed by the complete uselessness of Wolfran's fidelity and the ultimate triumph of Tannhäuser. The overture ends with a sustained effort which, before the true rendering of the work was understood in England, subjected the audience to an almost intolerable strain. The pilgrims' chant is at last thrown out of semibreves and crotchets, into prolonged breves and semibreves, with a continuous *forte* and an incessant shrill violin accompaniment of wearing yet tireless activity and intensity. This is the divine judgment emphasis —this is the reversal of the Papal decree—this is the redemption of human nature struggling with its opposite and indomitable tendencies, the victory that has overcome the world, the earthly and heavenly passion, seen for the first time in the hour of death, in supreme harmony as one and indivisible.

Act I.

After this immense introduction, which at once satisfies all our keenly aroused sensibilities, we find ourselves in that quiet region of contemplation, "above all pain, yet pitying all distress," whence we can witness undisturbed the pageantry of pleasure, remorse, love, sacrifice, and victory, which is about to pass before us.

450. VENUS.

In the glamour of roseate hues, smitten with the green glow as of prismatic light seen through ice, with vapours perfumed and aromatic rising in white clouds and dissolving in thin fleecy tints like sea-foam, the grotto of the Venus of the Venus-berg bursts upon us. The revelry seems at its wildest. We see the whirling of Bacchantes, but all is somewhat dim as in a dream or a dissolving view. The noisy music gives place to an exquisite siren-strain—a chorus of twenty bars only—it is the unearthly echo of magic voices calling the votaries of pleasure to the unhallowed delights of Holda, the dethroned Venus, once queen of heaven, now banished in disgrace to the bowels of the earth in the depths of the Venus-berg. Trenchant sarcasm on the helplessness of ascetic theology to mould the "great glad aboriginal instincts" into its system! Strange Nemesis of the religion of humanity, that the love of the sexes, made beautiful at least, if not holy, at Athens, should be relegated by Christian Rome to the infernal regions, that subterranean heaven of the Venus-berg, where

love might lose its purity without losing its power and become bitter!

A fatigue and stillness fall, we scarce know how, over the scene, the music droops, a white cloud rolls across and veils the groups as they sink on the mossy banks or disappear into the rose and emerald caverns. A last faint strain reaches our ears and dies away, we are alone with the sleeping Tannhäuser and his enchantress Holda.

Tannhäuser awakes. He has been dreaming, but not of Holda's love, not of the grotto; its delights are worn out for him, he is inwardly sated, the chain begins to gall him. Bells are ringing in his ears, happy bells that tinkle in mountain glens, reminding him of the happy earth, its flowers—not these suffocating exotics—not these intense and slumbrous perfumes—but fresh woodlands, the horn of the hunter, the notes of wild birds. He longs once more for the nightingale, and the morning sunlight that never reaches him here. And then comes one of those delicate perceptions into the deeps of human nature as the knight explains to the chiding goddess that a mortal cannot always enjoy thus; *that* belongs to the eternally young and vigorous gods. His own nature of earth is ill matched with pleasure alone; it clogs, it pains him; he pines for earth with all its sorrows, he aspires from the heart of pleasure, from the paradise of the senses, to the life of action and sacrifice, to the heaven

451.
TANNHÄUSER AND VENUS.

of the soul. The dormant energies of the true knight awaken and he must away. The famous song which forms the second feature in the overture now breaks from him as harp in hand he confronts the angry goddess, and, whilst singing her praises, declares that he will go. Again a subtle touch,—the genuine tribute to the worth of Venus *as far as she goes*; but the free assertion that, isolated alike from the activities and disciplinary sorrows of earth, she fills but a part of life. The soul reaches out from the garden of the senses to a wider world, it is oppressed by the o'erarching roof of the Venus-berg however crystalline and rosy, it sighs for the blue dome of the illimitable sky.

All this is unintelligible to Holda, the impersonation of the senses, and, like many an angry woman, she alternately chides and coaxes and storms, not perceiving that her power is gone and that her late slave, however respectful, is free, and determined to remain so. The allegory of life is now closely clung to in the skilful dialogue. Having stormed in vain, the forsaken charmer cries bitterly, "Come back, come back! try and believe what I can be to you again."

452. THE PARTING.

"I wish no longer for your gifts."

"Oh, if you should long again, do not let your pride keep you from my arms!"

Then summing up the extreme statement of the revulsion of feeling which inspires him, "My longings are not for

your pleasures but for battle. Listen, and know once for all, goddess, that I seek the Grave and I aspire to Death!"

"And if Death and the Grave reject you?"

"Death and the Grave are in my heart, and Repentance is my Peace!"

"There is no Rest or Salvation for you. I alone can give you Peace and Heaven."

Then, in a climax, the final note of the situation, nay, the key-note of the whole drama, is struck.

"Goddess of the Senses, in thee is not my Rest, but in Mary!" At the name of the most blessed Virgin, her successful rival, a loud clap of thunder shakes the grotto, and a dense cloud rolls over the stage, and Tannhäuser finds himself alone, but, as the thick white vapours part, the whole scene has shifted.

One of those sudden atmospheric changes in which WAGNER revels now takes place, reminding us of the change from the lurid fire-scene on the Walküre's rock to the midsummer sleep of the Walküre maiden when Siegfried finds her there.

453. CHANGE TO THE UPPER EARTH.

The grotto of the Venus-berg has vanished, with its purple shadows and rainbow lights, and dim recesses of mystery and underground magic—the free summer woods in the glory of May sunshine are before us, an old baronial castle crowns one of the near declivities. Tannhäuser finds himself not far from a wayside shrine and crucifix, on a wood-

land slope reclines a young shepherd, the tinkle of sheep-bells mingles with the artless notes of the rustic pipe. He is skilfully woven into the drama with his new life of the spring and innocence and free sweet nature, and forms a subtle link between the artificially-lighted midnight of the Venus-berg and the bright woods and mountains of a smiling earth. The shepherd sings in his quaint melody of his dream he has had of a longing to follow Dame Holda into the Venus-berg—symbol of an universal experience, it is the rustic's vague idea of the artificial luxury and dissipation of great cities. He awakes (happily for him) to the sweet routine of the summer pastures, the woodland notes, the rustic flute.

Play on, thou simple boy; the two worlds that meet in yonder knightly soul are not for thee; thou wilt never know the depth either of his agony or his joy—it is not given to everyone to explore the magic haunt of the Venus-berg, and then surrender at discretion to Holy Mary!

454. PILGRIMS PASS.

The chorus of the pilgrims taking up the first subject now approaches. Solemnly the cowled monks pass in front of the shrine, uttering a prayer to the crucified One, and a greeting to the Virgin mother. To Rome they are bound, to seek free grace and rest in absolution from sin at the hands of Holy Church. The chant is the very embodiment of Tannhäuser's own aspirations, and as the pilgrims disappear,

he falls at the foot of the crucifix and takes up the burden of the melodious prayer. Faint strains from the distant pilgrims come wafted on the air, a sound of holy bells is in his ears, his soul is bathed for the first time, after how many years! in the sweet and recreating emotion of penitence which seems to restore him to himself, and he vows never to rest till he too has found in a pilgrimage to Rome that pardon and peace which Rome alone can give.

455. HUNTERS PASS.

Suddenly hunting-horns break up his meditations, and a gay troop headed by the Landgrave and his knights come thronging down the mountain slope, and find the pilgrim Tannhäuser absorbed in prayer. The influence which others have upon a man's thoughts about himself is now happily illustrated. Tannhäuser, now recognised as the famous minstrel knight by the Landgrave and his friend Wolfran, at first will not hear of joining them. He is absorbed in his own thoughts of repentance; he is lost for ever to the world. Gradually the joyous greetings assure him that his old companions know nothing of his sin, his sorrow, or their causes—he is sympathetically won, his sensitive heart catches the light and fire of their good-fellowship. Some of us may remember those masterly moments in Mr. IRVING's acting, when, as Eugene Aram or the hero of the *Bells,* he has managed at moments to forget his own crime and feel almost innocent and upright in the reflected sympathy and ignorance of

those who believed him so; and is this not true to life? Does not a man feel twice guilty when found out? Is he not often redeemable *before* the brand has been put upon him, but not *afterwards*? To be accepted as innocent is sometimes almost as soothing to a broken spirit and a contrite heart as confession and absolution; and do we not all exercise a sort of absolution, binding and loosing from sin? The Landgrave and the merry hunters seem to toss the life and doings in Venus-berg away from Tannhäuser; they know nothing of them. For a moment, as he listens to their free joyous talk, the past seems wiped out. They remind him of his brilliant victory in song before he disappeared from among them—of Princess Elizabeth, who had acknowledged herself won by his knightly qualities, and who is ready to welcome him back. At the sound of her name his whole soul bounds, Venus is effaced, Holy Mary vanishes, Elizabeth seems now the idol ready to absorb and satisfy those senses profaned in the Venus-berg, and that soul so lately given in ascetic fervour to the Invisible and the Divine.

Act II.

The joyous prelude to the second act contains, at the eleventh and following bars, one of those magic passages which Wagner seems able to throw in at will. It is the essence of a heart bounding with joy, and is worked into the accompaniment where

456. ELIZABETH.

Elizabeth greets the minstrel hall, so full to her of joy, and the memories of Tannhäuser's triumph in song.

The great hall of the minstrels in the Wartburg is before us: a wide prospect of wild woodland and hill is seen from the spacious open verandah, and the fair Elizabeth enters, attired in flowing white, her countenance radiant with joy. In one of those broad and free melodic recitatives so suitable to that vast amount of thinking aloud which fills WAGNER'S operas, Elizabeth describes how her heart was won by the strains of the minstrel knight Tannhäuser. To her presently enter Wolfran and Tannhäuser. The shock is almost too sudden for the maiden Princess, as Tannhäuser throws himself at her feet; she implores him to leave her, but in another moment her scruples are overcome by his passionate entreaties. He seems to yield himself entirely to this new situation, nor is the spell broken when Elizabeth asks where he has been and what he has been doing.

"Far away," he answers, "in a distant land. The veil of oblivion has forever fallen between yesterday and to-day—everything in the past has vanished; only one thing remains painted upon the darkness—the glory of your perfection that I now salute, yet never thought to see again." Elizabeth still, with a touch of maidenly reserve, tries in vain to check her own raptures at his return, but ends in that full expansive utterance—that majestic strain so nobly intense and pure (such a contrast to the feverish sensuality of the

Venus-berg music), in which her noble love finds at once its expression and solace. Her reticence gives way. She is not afraid to tell him now all the strange growth of new feelings, vague longings, her sadness at his absence, her want of interest in all but him, her broken slumber, her waking tears, her maddening memories; and yet throughout she remains so simple, so pure, so guileless, that Tannhäuser feels, for the first time, what the true love of the pure woman might be to a man. Satisfying all, yet lifting all into a region of harmony and delight—not enervating but renewing and ennobling all things, and forming, indeed, the soul's missing link between earth and heaven! What wonder if in that moment the magic Venus and the mystic Mary are alike forgotten. The love duet rolls on impassioned, and yet strongly cast in an almost Mozartian mould of regularity, in which strophe and antistrophe are taken up alternately by the lovers, and whole phrases occur, ending with the perfect cadence, and repeated without variation as in the most orthodox Italian *scena*. We must recollect that *Tannhäuser* is not *Lohengrin*, and still leans more to the recognised form than any of WAGNER'S later operas. But here I cannot think that the regularity of form is in the least out of place, or in conflict with the sense and admirably dramatic finish of the episode, which will not suffer by comparison with any predecessor of any school.

At the close of the duet Tannhäuser leaves the stage, and

the Landgrave finds Elizabeth and bids her prepare for the reception of the whole court to witness a contest between various bards—amongst whom Tannhäuser will of course be found. Elizabeth will have to crown the victor. The pageantry which now follows, accompanied by the famous assembling march, is of its kind unequalled in the annals of opera.

457. THE LANDGRAVE.

The Tournament of Song brings us to perhaps the most connected suite of melody in all WAGNER'S works. The march, which so largely contributes to the popularity of this opera, moves on with a rhythm and a richness worthy of the gorgeous display of pages in mauve, scarlet, white, and purple—of ladies with delicately contrasted court trains of canary-yellow, blue, dove-grey, with touches of crimson velvet, plumes, and blaze of jewels; troops of knights with retainers steel-clad with shining helmet and falchion. On a throne the Landgrave takes his seat, with Elizabeth, the Queen of the Song Tournay, at his right. The bards with their harps are ranged in front, and seated, Tannhäuser amongst them; and as the rainbow crowd continues to defile slowly into the spacious hall, and seems likely to fill every part of it, a joyous chorus takes up the burden of the march and pours forth the most exhilarating strains in honour of the Landgrave and the approaching festival of song—not a touch of foreboding, not a trace of sadness to warn us of

458. THE PROCESSIONAL MARCH.

the impending catastrophe. The music runs chiefly in the metallic major key of five sharps, full of exulting joy and expectant triumph.

459. THE MINSTREL'S MUSIC.

We now approach a scene which almost every critic has found to be a disappointment. The music improvised by the bards is considered dull. It might have been less stiff and more melodic. Even Wolfran's music, usually, at least, as fine and melodic, if not more so, than Tannhäuser's own, is tame and formal, and so is Walter's, but it seems to us all this is for a purpose. The splendid assembling melody just traversed passes into the arid and artificial praise of woman's love, as a thing too exquisitely exalted to be approached; or in fact, to have anything to do with the senses at all. The conception and the language are both exaggerated and false, and the arid music betrays its real heartlessness; it is the fitting prelude to the over-glowing and wild bound of sensuous melody which is about to break from Tannhäuser in vindication of the senses.

460. CHIVALRY, THE WORLD, THE CHURCH.

The exact *casus belli*, or triangular conflict, between Chivalry, the World, and the Church, is here caught and stated for us with quite surprising force. Chivalry in its religious mood converted every woman into a VIRGIN MARY. The praises of Love had then to be sung in this attenuated atmosphere, in which the senses

could not breathe. It was like playing *Othello* without the Moor of Venice; it was the futile attempt to wed the natural love of the sexes to the Church's ideal of celibate purity, and the greater the collision with reality and practice, the stronger, the more conventional became the futile attempt. Love is the subject proposed to the bards in competition. Wolfran declares that in the presence of Elizabeth's beauty his heart dissolves in prayerful dreams. There is the source of all delight—the balm of all grief. He aspires to worship and die for the lady, but views with horror the notion of rashly troubling her with any wild desires. This little piece of strained humbug, sung by one who probably does not believe a word of it, is greeted by the crowd, who certainly do not practise it, with much applause: "We praise thy noble song!" Tannhäuser now replies; at first keeping within bounds, and giving a natural expression to a legitimate sentiment, he remarks that he, too, has felt the love of woman, but that, so far from not troubling her with desire, he conceives that this is, after all, the root of the matter; that if a man could not understand that, he could not know much about love. For his part, he glories in it, and has no fear or misgiving about it.

It is characteristic of Tannhäuser that, having spoken this half truth, he goes no farther; and Walter cuts in with the other half truth, and utters his platitudes about virtue, meaning by virtue continence. He denounces the

notion that woman's love ought to have anything to do with the senses, and thus places his own conception in antagonism with Tannhäuser's.

Such, indeed, was the work and the influence of the Church of the period. There was no one to step forth and lift the two half truths into a higher region of holy and healthy unity—by proclaiming the consecration of sense by affection and self-restraint, instead of its extinction or corruption by abstinence and emotional mysticism. No one could then and there solve the problem which Protestantism has after all only half solved, retaining a theory but half consistent with its practice, and the consequences to Tannhäuser and Elizabeth were quickly fatal.

If the Venus-berg had done nothing else for Tannhäuser, it had at all events taught him one lesson that he could never forget—"THE TREMENDOUS EMPIRE OF THE SENSES." On hearing them alternately ignored and trampled upon, he rushes impetuously on the wings of a strange knowledge into furious opposition, and, casting all caution to the winds, breaks though the formal stupidity of his rivals into an assertion of what is, at least, true and blameless in itself, that man as man is constituted specially to love woman as woman. The fine trait of Elizabeth's mute instinctive assent to this passionate assertion is dramatic and touching—it is the unconscious purity of a simple-minded and pure woman assenting to a natural fact.

461. TANNHÄUSER SPLITS ON THE ROCK.

She is soon taught better by the burst of indignant horror that breaks from the conventional crowd—"Silence his madness!" Poor Tannhäuser, thus bullied by the crowd, condemned by his friend Wolfran, defied to single combat, loses his head, and utters the exaggerated statement of what, if it had been left alone, would after all have been true and fair enough, though not the whole truth about love. Forced into opposition, and wild with admiration and desire for Elizabeth, he flies at a bound into the praise of Venus. The songs of the enchanted mountain are in his ears, and force themselves in wild snatches through the agitated orchestra—his voice climbs boldly up through the famous and free melody, in which he praised Venus at the moment of his departure. Alas! it is also the knell of that noble love for Elizabeth, which might have lifted him, but which he must also shortly abandon for ever; and Tannhäuser, the too bold champion of nature and nature's rights, falls, in the moment of his perfervid but almost healthy protest, a victim to the combined incapacity of the Church and Chivalry to reconcile without emasculating the secular and religious impulses of our nature.

At the unhappy name of Venus in Tannhäuser's song, all the accursed and sensual horrors of the Venus-berg are instantly associated with the minstrel knight. Elizabeth herself perceives that his position is untenable. The dying mythology at once hurls Tannhäuser from the heaven of Christian grace. Swords are drawn, and the saintly Eliza-

beth can only throw herself between her outcast lover and his would-be murderers! Tannhäuser has now got thoroughly confused himself. He has been irresistibly impelled to speak an irresistible truth. Yet that truth in that form was evidently sin—deserved punishment—cried for penance and divine pardon. "THE TREMENDOUS EMPIRE OF THE SENSES," "the strong man armed," begins to confess a mightier power,—"THE IMMENSE SUPREMACY OF THE SOUL!" Tannhäuser grovels in the dust before an injured saint, an infuriated mob, an offended God.

I shall not attempt to describe the glowing pages of chorus in which this complex situation is rendered. Just as the scene is growing a little too tense and harrowing, without in the valley is heard a chant of young pilgrims. It is the refrain of the great subject of the overture which binds the whole of the opera together with a quite magical unity. Before that sweet, unearthly, familiar strain, a silence falls upon the turbulent citizens in the great hall. Some repair to the wide open verandah to see the pilgrims. But to Tannhäuser's highly-wrought mood that chant is as the voice of heaven—he, too, remembers his sudden vow to become a pilgrim and repair to Rome, where, at the hands of the Holy Father, after due penance, he may perchance find some dawn of hope, and be purged from his grievous sin.

462. TO ROME!

So, as he passes swiftly out of the hall to meet the

pilgrims, with a great shout from the assembled throng, "*To Rome!*" the second act closes.

Act III.

It is the wayside crucifix of the first act—no longer a scarcely solemn or pathetic object, lost in the thronging glories of the bright morning woods in spring, but now, in the fall of the year, seen in the autumn twilight, it stands out grim and dark, and all the scene has grown sad and sombre. Wolfran advances towards the shrine in search of Elizabeth, who is, since the departure of Tannhäuser, ever to be found praying there alone, and alone she still would be. She mutely waves Wolfran aside, thanking him for his friendly sympathy, but relapsing into silent and absorbed prayer. On the evening wind comes again the floating chant of the pilgrims, now returning from Rome. The maiden rises, and listens in startled excitement and intense expectation. The sweet and majestic chant reaches its climax as the pilgrims defile before the crucifix. Elizabeth watches each hooded figure with increasing despair. *He* is not there. As the last passes she feels that the bitterness of death has come and passed with them, and, falling upon her knees, she prays that her last earthly longings may be forgiven, and that, white and free from stain, she may be soon received into the heavenly kingdom, and that her beloved may also find grace at the last. Once more Wolfran

463. THE WAYSIDE CRUCIFIX.

approaches her respectfully, but she needs not his support. Her step does not falter now; the last touch of human frailty has left her; she is sensible to no earthly blandishments, the heavenly bridegroom has claimed her for his own, and gentle death will soon lead her into his presence.

As we listen to the exquisite stream of pure melody which flows once only from the flutes and clarionets as Elizabeth slowly descends into the valley and disappears towards the Wartburg, we are irresistibly reminded of Longfellow's exquisite translation:

> O Land! O Land! for all the broken-hearted
> The mildest herald by our fate allotted
> Beckons, and with inverted torch doth stand
> To lead us with a gentle hand
> Into the land of the great departed,
> Into the Silent Land!

This solemn and peaceful scene is followed by one even more composed and restful—more dignified it could scarcely be. The terrible sorrow and sublime resignation of Elizabeth seem to have weaned Wolfran from all his earthly desires, and he has ceased almost to regret the love of Elizabeth for himself, whilst committing her to the care of Heaven in his incomparable song to the evening star. In the deepening twilight he prays that, as she so wills it, she may be taken from a world of pain and sorrow into the eternal joy, and there, in the trackless fields of light, which seem to mortals the very homes of the sweet and solemn starlight, she may find the heavenly and fadeless day.

We have all this time been unconsciously, and with consummate dramatic art, prepared for the final climax.

464. ENTER TANNHÄUSER.

Wolfran checks his harp, as a wayworn man of grief approaches; his emaciated form, his wild eyes, his squalor and unsteady gait, tell of immense sufferings and privation, bodily and mental.

Wolfran scarcely recognises Tannhäuser in the strange figure before him.

"Who art thou, solitary one?"

"Who am I? I know *thee* well—Wolfran, the famed minstrel."

The touch of bitterness reminding his friend of the artificial song of love which called forth his own passionate and disastrous protest, is retaliated with—

"Darest thou retrace thy steps unpardoned?"

"Fear not, my famous bard, I seek not thee; but I do seek a man to show me the way."

"What way?"

"The way to the Venus-berg."

In another instant Tannhäuser has passed from bitterness to confession; and as Wolfran inquires concerning his pilgrimage, he unburdens himself freely in the following magnificent oration, which, as a simple piece of dramatic declamation, deserves a high rank. We repeat, that WAGNER'S drama is of its kind equal to its music; it will repay careful study, and we

465. TANNHÄUSER'S CONFESSION AND DEATH.

cannot forbear giving here a free translation, with connecting narrative:

"Listen! Wolfran, listen! With a heart more fervently penitent than ever was heart of pilgrim, I sought the road to Rome An angel—ah, woe is me!—had rooted out the pride of sin; but I longed to expiate that pride in deep abasement. I longed for the grace denied me, in order to ease the bitterness of that angel's tears for me, a sinner! The rough way selected by the most contrite pilgrim seemed all too easy for me. When he chose the soft grass for his bare feet, I sought the sharp stones and thorny places for mine. When he slaked his thirst in cool rivulets, I only drank in the fiery torrent of the sun. Whilst he prayed to heaven, I shed my life-blood in honour of the Most High. When the travellers rested in the inn, I was stretched without in ice and wind and snow. I went like a blind man through the magic plains of Italy. I did it all because I thought, in dying to the world, by contrition, to soothe the weeping of my dear angel. I arrived at Rome. I approached the holy throne. I bowed in prayer and self-abasement on the threshold of the sanctuary. The morning broke. I heard a chiming of bells and a chorus of celestial voices; the whole temple seemed filled with praise and fervent joy, for plenary indulgence, grace and pardon were promised to the multitude of penitents. Then I saw him, God's Vicar upon earth! We grovelled in the dust at his feet. I saw him give pardon to thousands of sinners like me, and they rose up absolved, and oh, how happy! And I drew near. My head was bared; I smote on my breast; I said, 'God be merciful to me, even to me: God forgive the criminal pleasures—the crime of the senses, the unsubdued desires.' In my agony I implored the Holy Father to loose me from the chain of my sins; and God knows my soul was pierced through at that moment with many sorrows. And His Vicar whom I besought made answer thus, Wolfran, only thus: 'If thou hast shared these criminal joys—if thy heart has been seared with Hell's own fire—if thou hast been in the Venus-berg, there is an end of it: thou art damned for ever. Even as this dry staff of my crozier will never blossom more, so neither shall salvation ever blossom for thy soul in hell.' At these words I fell senseless to the earth as one dead. When I came to myself I was alone in the vast temple. It was night; I heard a pilgrim chant of joy and salvation; those holy strains filled me with horror. I fled from that lying hymn; it fell chill upon my shuddering soul, and seemed to freeze my heart to ice. Then suddenly, with irresistible violence, I felt

myself drawn back to that burning enchantress who had once filled me with such unspeakable ecstasy. I return to thee, sweet Venus—my only consoler. I come, I come to thy nightly entrancing pleasure, to thy glittering court, where all thy beauties smile to greet me, for evermore, throughout eternity!"

"Unhappy man!" cries Wolfran, who sees that his friend is under a spell and going mad. He tries to stop his growing exaltation as he invokes Venus.

"Thou hearest, my love, my goddess! All men curse me. Guide thou my steps." The white Venus cloud begins to pass over the stage; then comes the wild cry of the sirens, now no longer soft and seductive as of yore, but almost harsh and strident, like the voices of women roughened in the bitter life of the barren senses. But Tannhäuser's head is gone.

"Ah! heavenly perfume—delicious voices! I am yours! Come, come, ye nymphs; I see your joyous forms! Crown me with pleasures! I feel the secret fire in all my veins. I know their soft low light—it is the enchanted mist of the Venus-berg—the reign of love!" At that moment the vision of Venus, stretched on a bed of roses, appears for an instant, and Tannhäuser is with difficulty restrained by the strong arms of Wolfran from rushing towards her. For the last time she calls him. But now songs of the pilgrims are heard in the valley—the Venus-berg was but an enchantment of the senses. Tannhäuser listens and gazes transfixed as a funeral procession draws near. At the sound of prayer Venus and her crew vanish. The Pagan deity is after all ousted by the Christian martyr. Elizabeth has prayed for Tannhäuser with her dying breath. Elizabeth has interceded for him on earth: his good angel in heaven, his victorious saint. Her prayers have been heard. For a moment only the magical form of Venus had flashed out and passed—another form now fills the heart and brain of the ruined knight. Elizabeth, lying dead upon her bier, is borne in. As the fair corpse, strewn with flowers, is set down, the sun breaks out and reveals a glorious summer day. The pilgrim strain rises once more to heaven, and Tannhäuser, whilst the last dimness clouds his eyes, worn with disease and suffering, staggers to the bier and falls prostrate in death by the side of his beloved. A line of young pilgrims bearing a budding staff, in token of his supreme forgiveness, pass singing:

"Blessed is the pure virgin who has joined the glorious company of the angels. Blessed is the sinner for whom she has prayed and won heaven's pardon." And then the united assembly reply, re-echoing

the great Pilgrim Chorus, heard first in the overture, and last over the corpses of the faithful lovers:

> "The sinner has received the pardon of heaven;
> He enters into the rest of the blessed ones."

. . . . .

It would be difficult to add to such a close as this. The parable seems at last fully worked out. The noblest nature, filled with the genuine experiences of both extremes of life, seeks for guidance and counsel at the hands of Rome, and is rejected. The last incompetence of Roman Catholicism to deal with life has been demonstrated, and the *reductio ad absurdum* of its method is reached in the Pope's heartless and stupid speech. Certain sins by Rome's decree are venial, others are mortal; man has made, and man, in the name of God, administers the scale of punishment which he has made. The whole system is here exhibited as not alive, but mechanical, and as a gross outrage upon the rights of the human conscience and the spiritual facts of the soul. In Tannhäuser this inhuman management produces despair and worse crime, when a higher vision is suddenly opened up, and above the dream of the senses, above the anathema of the Pope—somehow inseparably connected with human love, but with human love deprived at last of all its lower conditions—the sweet pardon comes home, as it were, on the wings of angels, and the weary pilgrim, rejected on earth but received in heaven, passes to rejoin the best beloved in the peace of God.

466. PHILOSOPHY OF TANNHÄUSER.

IX.

LOHENGRIN.

THOSE who see TRANSUBSTANTIATION, the blood real or the blood royal, or the "HOLY GRAIL," only through the gross controversial mists of the Reformation, see but the prose. The poetry of the great Romanist dogma shines out in that cycle of Middle-Age legends, derived originally from the Welsh bards, into which the French Trouvères poured the spirit of the new chivalry, leaving the later Germanic singers to invest their lays with a spiritual, not to say theological, significance. In the legend of Parsifal and the Holy Grail, transubstantiation is no longer seen as the lowest degradation to which a miracle-monger can subject a pathetic symbol. It rises at once to the highest level of poetic inspiration. It becomes the immortal expression of the courage, self-sacrifice, and purity of the ideal Christian knight.

467. THE BLOOD ROYAL OR REAL.

The story of the sacred quest, and the guardianship of the "real blood" in its varied developments, sums up

not only the noble impulses of the Middle Ages, but some of the most central needs and religious passions of human nature. The dramas that circle round it are the dramas of our common endeavour, patience, failure, and aspiration. The Incidents belong to an eternally recurring class. The Characters remain in their vast outline so many phases of the human soul. The Moral is the moral of human life as it repeats itself, essentially the same under all Protean changes of time and place. It is this representative quality that has so impressed WAGNER with the force and superiority of legend or the mythus to present, in a condensed and simple form, the feelings common to our nature. There they appear raised, by situations purely ideal, to their highest degree of intensity. The love of all women is in Elsa,—their jealousy and revenge is in Ortrud; the *abandon* and despair of all noble and blighted natures in Tannhäuser, their nobility and thirst for action in Lohengrin.

468. THE DEPTH OF THE SYMBOL AND ITS LEGEND.

But the reader must now grasp the elements of the narrative itself, as it rises out of a double legend, into that peculiar distinctness which the genius of WAGNER has impressed upon his version of the "Sangrail" and the "Knight of the Swan."

The cup of the holy blood was that in which our Lord had consecrated the elements at His last supper. To the

eye of faith that cup had never perished. It existed still;

469. THE STORY OF THE BLOOD.

it ever would exist—blessed by the Lord Himself, filled with His blood, the very visible incarnation of His unspeakable love in its sublime purity and sacrifice. There, in one glowing symbol, is the whole parable of the sacramental claim. Literalised by Rome, it reads thus:—"On earth, in a material cup, is the real presence, dwelling for ever incarnate, with men."

That dogma is the secret of all sacerdotalism. The quest might belong to the people; but the guardianship of the sacred elements, attributed in the myth to the holy knights, belonged, in reality, to the holy Church, before whose mystic thrall all Christian knights bowed down.

Joseph of Arimathea had been the first guardian; but for the sins of the world, as faith grew cold, the holy cup had been caught away by angels to heaven, only to be restored to Titurel, the anointed knight.

Even so does divine truth appear, disappear, and reappear, as the world is able and worthy to entertain it.

On the summit of a lofty mountain, clothed with luxuriant forests, somewhere, as the Trouvères supposed, on the confines of India, or the Visigoth mountains of Spain, stood a glittering pile. There Titurel, with a band of chosen knights, kept the Holy Grail in the palace of Montsalvat. Those shining domes of clear agate were lifted with opal columns. The walls glowed with Oriental jasper; the shrine was bright with gold and precious stones; the per-

fume of myrrh and aloes floated through its corridors, and the fertility of Eden surrounded its precincts with tropical fruits and flowers.

The imagery of Montsalvat is a strange mixture of Asiatic mystery and Eastern pomp, wedded to the Catholic shrines of the West. It is a Mont St. Michel in the tropics. The knights of the Grail embodied exactly the Church's conception of the warrior's highest mission. Her knight was a religious mystic, but he appeared constantly in the world, and stood like an impassable barrier between injured innocence and brutal force. Lohengrin is the shining embodiment of the moral force, represented by the Church of the Middle Ages, which enabled the unarmed monk to dash princes and proud monarchs from their thrones. The knight of the Sangrail came as the angel of God, with all an angel's might, and more than an angel's sympathy. He shows himself a man amongst men, but the mystery of Montsalvat was upon him. He could not justify or explain his actions; he could not reveal his name. The question, "By what authority doest thou these things?" will ever be met by the noblest natures with sealed lips. The "things" are their own authority. Every spiritual mission justifies itself. When its prophet stoops to explain, the hour of his retirement is at hand. Like Lohengrin, his power is at an end, he must return to Montsalvat, and leave a world

470. MONTSALVAT AND LOHENGRIN.

to which so much has been given, and which has proved itself worthy of so little.

Titurel was succeeded by Parsifal, and Lohengrin was the son of Parsifal. It is at this point that the Germanic legend of the Knight of the Swan, so popular at the mouths of great rivers, weds itself to the wider myth of the Saint Grail.

471. THE SWAN LEGEND AND ELSA.

An innocent woman of high rank is accused by brutal conspirators of a high crime. She sees in a dream a knight of superhuman splendour who promises to be her champion. In the hour of her trial he appears, drawn by a swan in a mystic bark from the open sea. He enters the mouth of the river, lands, and conquers. He weds her on one condition, that she will never ask his name or his credentials. She promises, but at last cannot resist the temptation; she urges the fatal question. The swan reappears, and the knight is borne away from her for ever.

472. LOHENGRIN PRELUDE.

WAGNER's opening prelude to *Lohengrin* resumes the clear phases of the coming drama. It is a wondrous sound epitome, arousing the emotions appropriate to the subtle depth of each phase, and shaking the soul of the listener with a certain keen hunger of expectant curiosity. It is like one of those crystal globes in BURNE JONES's masterpiece, *The Days of Creation*.

The essence of the day to be born is there, as the essence of *Lohengrin* is in the mystic prelude.

But more various and suggestive is the musical language of pure emotion than any image or painted symbols of crystal globes and angels, for the musical strain provides the single emotion in its fulness and indivisibility, which fires a whole set of symbols, and animates a whole series of incidents.

473. THE CONCEPTION OF "LOHENGRIN" ANALYSED.

You may state *Lohengrin* as a STORY, as a PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTION, as a SYMBOL, or as a pure METAPHYSICAL IDEA, and music shall seize and inspire each statement. As a STORY, it is the knight coming from the remote and mystic shrine of Montsalvat to the banks of the Scheldt to rescue a forlorn maiden, entering into the din and turmoil of war and human passion, and at last retiring to the inviolable sanctuary.

As a PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTION, it sums up the two poles of human nature—the passion for *contemplation*, and the *passion for action*. In the Middle Ages, the monastic solitude, with its visions and its mysteries, stood for one; chivalry, with its knights-errant and its bloody wars and adventures, stood for the other; and in the legends of the Sangrail the two are united, but the conception is a representative one, and eternally, philosophically true to human nature. Man dreams and aspires; he seeks isola-

tion: he places leagues of ocean, continents, impenetrable forests, between his soul and the work-a-day world. He ascends his holy mountain, his Montsalvat, and dwells in its resplendent halls, on the very confines between heaven and earth. Still, even there he seeks for confraternity in his isolation. There are with him others, Titurel, Parsifal, the knights of the holy quest, of the San Grail, of the blood which is the life thereof. But to what end this science of contemplation? to what end this heart alternately refrained and expanded, these muscles so firmly knit, these limbs so proudly clad in shining mail, this bright sword lying idle in its scabbard? Made strong and holy, for what but for action? Prepared, but not made perfect, except through suffering. The return of the holy knight to the struggles of the world is at once the recognition of the spiritual force embodied by the Church, and the condemnation of the monastic ideal of solitude and prayer. The larger moral missed by the Church is caught by the popular myth. The discipline of life is not apart from human love, however shining may be the summits of Montsalvat.

The training of the heart must lie in the full expansion of love. Lohengrin loves Elsa.

The training of the hand must be in knightly deeds done amongst men. Lohengrin slays the oppressor.

In the midst of glory come pain and separation, yet the experience and trial have both been needful; and though the latest note be one of sorrow, yet will the white swan,

Death, lead the good knight safely through the rolling waters to his rest.

As a SYMBOL, the descent of the mystic knight, the glimpse of his supernal graces vouchsafed to earth, and his withdrawal to the mysterious region, is all imaged by the vision of the holy cup borne of angels, which to the expectant saint comes from out the remote distance—"Rose-red, with beatings in it as if alive, till all the white walls of the cell are dyed with rosy colours leaping on the wall, and then . . . the Grail pass'd."—*Tennyson.*

As a pure METAPHYSICAL idea, Lohengrin stands for the dawn of sensibility; as when one awakes after long sleep, and, slowly recovering consciousness, begins to feel life in all one's limbs, and to be keenly conscious of the sun, and flowers, and of food, and wine—all the activities and stimulants of life. Then, after a climax of consciousness to pain or to pleasure has been reached, the slow returning of sensibility into the realm of unconscious sleep. Life in the work-a-day world has been taken away, and the white swan of sleep has borne the weary one back to the dreamland of Montsalvat.

474. ANALYSIS OF PRELUDE.

And now let us come upon the Prelude, and see how it closes with Lohengrin under one and all of these aspects—how it kindles through music the one and indivisible tide of emotion that flows through the series of dramatic, philosophical,

symbolical, or metaphysical conceptions, which I have referred to.

And here, if not before, our powers of description may well fail. The orchestra alone can take their place. But who has not heard, in the shrill breathing of the opening violins and flutes,

> The slender sound,
> As from a distance beyond distance,
> . . . O! never harp was born,
> Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand,
> Was like that music as it came.

How it remains for long in the upper air, as loth to leave the shining heights of Montsalvat, then steals cautiously down to parley with some earthlier whispers. Like Brünnhilde, the Walküre stooping from Walhalla to listen to the plaint of human lovers, even so is the high sound drawn to earth. The warm tints of the sunny genial world, with all its lights and shadows, "all the wealth, and all the woe," begin to glow and mantle in the richly-swelling tide of sound. One by one all the instruments of the orchestra are gathered in as the deeper notes of the descending scale climb downwards, and the varied voices of pain and forebodings and excess of tender love are woven into the mighty fabric of suspended harmonies, until with a vast shattering of silver cymbals the climax is reached and repeated, and then the little far-off voice of bitterness like a heart-pang shoots through the rich and laden atmosphere of changing and dissolving sound, and we suddenly are conscious that the

power of the spell is waning, the satisfaction of a finished work sinks in upon the soul, lately the scene of such stormy and conflicting emotions, and we heave a long and peaceful sigh as the phrase ends with a perfect major close. But at that moment, like Elsa awaking from her deadly swoon, we are aware that the shining knight is gone. The music is caught up higher and higher, further and further "the slender sound" from "a distance beyond distance" recedes as it came, and as the ear clings to the last faint ethereal whisper in the upper air, we perceive that the knight of the Sangrail has passed.

Act I.

As the last whisper of shrill violin harmonics dies away, the curtain rises upon the grassy lowlands in the neighbourhood of Antwerp. The river winds away into the distance, broadening out to the dim and hazy sea. The whole scene lies glowing and palpitating in the splendour of a summer day, and Henry, the King of Germany, seated under a spreading oak, holds his court with military pomp. The foreground is crowded with knights and retainers in splendid costumes.

475. BY THE SCHELDT.

A blast of trumpets sounds, and a herald steps forward, and in a musical phrase closely imitative of the natural

inflection of a voice bawling out loud, proclaims his sovereign's will, which is, that an army should at once muster to serve the king in his foreign wars. The enthusiasm of the people is checked by the very business-like way in which the King rises, and in dignified Wagnerian recitative reminds his loyal people of their internal discords, and especially of their immediate disagreement about the Overlordship of Brabant itself, and he then calls upon the leading noble, Frederic Count of Telramund, to show the cause. This ambitious man, who has married Ortrud, a lineal princess of Friesland, and who aspires to the vacant throne of Brabant, then steps forth and tells how that the late ruling Duke made him guardian of his two children, Gottfried and Elsa; how that Elsa, who should have been his own bride, conspired with some unknown lover, doubtless eager for the crown, and treacherously in a wood made away with her brother, Gottfried; how he, the Count, then married Ortrud and claimed the throne for himself. He then proceeds to arraign Elsa for the murder of her brother, and here the legend of the swan is slipped in.

476. ENTER THE KING.

The discerning reader may as well know that Gottfried has been turned into a swan by the magic arts of the wicked Frisian Princess Ortrud, who aspires with Frederic Telramund to the vacant throne. A thrill of horror runs through the assembly on learning the charge now made against Elsa, and a highly expressive cry bursts forth from the people. The first crisis is steadily worked up with all the dramatic

art and patient analysis of the situation so characteristic of WAGNER'S genius. Nothing is forgotten. The King bids the Count consider the awful nature of the charge. The Count grows more violent in his assertions, and begins to impute all those base motives to Elsa which are indeed his own.

The King reproves him judicially, and recalls the controversy to facts with "Summon the maid!" The herald now proclaims a judicial trial, and the royal will is emphasized by a great unsheathing and flourishing of swords. In answer to the general summons, Elsa, in pure white, accompanied by her maidens, is seen approaching. The crowd parts as she slowly moves like one in a trance not seeing or hearing. A cry of subdued admiration and sympathy greets her, and is immediately followed by the first Elsa motive in the orchestra—that strain of pure and pathetic melody, inseparably connected with her innocence and her vision of Lohengrin. The crowd are half won over.

477. ENTER ELSA.

"How like an angel of light! He who accuses her must surely prove her guilt." She stands face to face with the King. In answer to his questions she inclines her head, but speaks not when asked to confess her guilt. With a weary, dreamy sigh come the words "Alas! my poor brother!" The King and the people are staggered, when Elsa raises her head, and in a strain that must ever thrill

all hearers into rapt silence, she relates, with eyes dreamy and fixed, how, an unprotected orphan, she has often prayed for a heavenly guide.

The crowd stare wonderingly.

The King, a little impatient, breaks in with "Elsa, defend thyself!" Now from the orchestra softly streams the opening subject of the prelude, the dream music of Montsalvat. Thither indeed at such a moment has the spirit of Elsa been caught away. Her face begins to glow; as she is lifted up to the celestial contemplation, she describes the form of the shining knight who appeared in answer to the orphan's prayer, and ends with the passionate apostrophe, "My guardian, my defender, thou shalt be my champion!"

Her prayer is echoed by the excited multitude. The King alone resists the spell. Instantly the rival Count seizes his occasion to declare that she calls for her paramour, and that he is prepared to meet him in single combat. Not a man steps forth. The wavering crowd are evidently struck by his determined attitude.

The King expresses confidence in the Count, and things are beginning to look black indeed for Elsa.

Still the King will not judge—Heaven alone must decide—Telramund is pledged to fight. All eyes turn to Elsa. She accepts the challenge, and is asked for her champion. She grows dreamy, speaks again of her knight, and offers herself up to him in a kind of ecstatic prayer. Her

spell is once more on the inconstant crowd. "A noble prize! who will the victor be?"

The solemn moment has arrived. The herald again steps forth, and with declamatory accents, simulating the natural inflections, he calls for Elsa's champion. There is no answer, and the dropping notes of the trombone and violoncello *pizzicato* admirably render the pause of suspense. Elsa passes slowly from tranquillity to agitation. The crowd begins to side against her, the hostile court exults. Elsa turns to the King, and implores for one more summons. Again the trumpets sound, again the herald cries; again an ominous silence, broken only by one soft trumpet note, a still softer horn note, then five taps, like fate, on the kettle-drum, suspended by rests. "The Heavens are silent, she is doomed," cries the mob, and Elsa sinks on her knees in passionate prayer—a prayer of exquisite distress, which is soon changed as her vision brightens to a growing ecstasy.

478. WILL HE COME?

"O Lord, send my knight!
Send him again stainless and white.
Let me behold that form of light!"

The tremulous violins sustain and suspend the stretched emotion, whilst a strange shudder passes through the crowd. A group on the banks are now looking seaward. Something is stealing out of the hazy distance. Little cries arise, then shouts, and, "Look!

479. THE SWAN AND THE KNIGHT.

a marvel!" then a confused roar of voices, and a rush and mingling together of the gaily-decked multitude. "A swan! a fair swan! yonder a bark—the swan drawing the bark. A knight, a full fair knight, shining in resplendent armour. A helm of light—see how he gains the shore!" He comes, and from the crowd behind who cannot see—"What? where? there! look! who is it?" Such are the exclamations of this eight-part chorus, which renders better than any description, the exciting and rapturous scene which now unfolds itself, as the crowd parts to right and left, and the knight, the unknown knight, who is Lohengrin, steps from the swan-drawn bark, clad in shining silver mail from top to toe, and stands for a moment waving his adieu to the swan.

In that strain of unaccompanied melody, so famous, and so clear in its lofty, fearless simplicity, he announces his mission to the King, and in another moment Elsa is in his arms.

The first development of the parable is reached. Lohengrin has found the earthly counterpart to his mystic passion for the Holy Grail. He has heard from the lips of his queen those glowing words, "My hope! my solace, my hero, I am thine!" but in an instant, before surrendering himself, he guards his sacred identity with, "Never, as thou dost love me, ask from whence I came—never ask my race or name."

With these words, the first ominous notes of pain, which recur again in the mouth of Elsa's rival, Ortrud, and which are henceforth identified with the fatal question, and weighted with the woe of the final catastrophe, are heard; and the phrase is followed by that other famous recurring strain, expressive of the weird mystery that envelops Lohengrin, and for ever separates him from his earthly surroundings, even at the moment when he seems most immersed in and identified with all human interests of love and war; and the warning is twice repeated.

480 SURGIT AMARE ALIQUID.

In a transport of confiding love, Elsa promises everything. Then Lohengrin clasps her to his breast, with the simple but intense words wedded to the simplest, clearest, musical phrase, "Elsa, I love thee." The snatch of six part-chorus that now greets the pair, "O, sweet enchantment, wondrous love!" is a piece of rich and satisfying harmony, in which the leading melody, full of repose, rings high above the glowing chords and modulations upon which it is floated out.

But the champions already stand face to face, and whilst the ground is being measured out, bandy words of mutual defiance. Then the herald once more proclaims aloud the fight. The two rivals commit their cause to heaven. The King, for the first time, becomes thoroughly melodic and lyrical in his prayer, which

481. THE DUEL.

is taken up by the whole assembly, in a full and overpowering chorus of considerable length, at the close of which, to the rattle of violins, the King draws his sword as the signal to begin.

Trumpets on the stage blare forth, and the combatants rush together. The indescribable close of the first act must be left to the reader's imagination or memory. Frederic falls before Lohengrin's sword, his life is magnanimously spared. Elsa's ecstasy, the intense passion of which silences the turbulent burst of chorus, surpasses in its fervour the famous "Robert, toi que j'aime!" itself a masterpiece of dramatic passion.

Nothing finer of its kind has ever been conceived than the phrase beginning on *G* above the line, "Joy, oh joy!" taking a new flight on *A*, yearning on that elevation for a still more intense expression; and at last scaling to the upper *B* in that bounding strain, at the close of which Elsa sinks exhausted upon Lohengrin's breast.

482. THE CLOSE OF ACT I.

A lesser artist would have here brought down the curtain, but the climax is rounded off superbly with ten more pages of chorus in eleven parts, in which the rage and astonishment of Count Frederic and Ortrud his consort, the thanksgiving of the king, the triumph of the knight, the ecstasy of Elsa, and the bewildered joy of the multitude, take up the heroine's strain, and work out her touching and melodic

phrases in a symphonic form, and with a wealth of orchestration worthy of the finest parts of *Fidelio.* At the close of which Frederic falls in despair at the feet of his wife Ortrud, Lohengrin is carried off in procession on his own shield, and Elsa is raised high on the King's, o'erspread with gorgeous mantles, whilst the curtain descends amid the universal rejoicings.

Act II.

The moon is slowly rising over the square of the great Minster of Antwerp. On one side of it is ranged the palace brightly lighted up, and the sound of dance

483. ORTRUD AND TELRAMUND. music mingles incongruously with the lonely gloom of the two dark figures cowering on the steps in front of the cathedral portals.

In the long and stormy duet which follows, Frederic upbraids Ortrud with having goaded him on falsely to accuse Elsa of her brother's murder. He had weakly relied on his wife's lie and her magic to slay his rival. Now he had been thrown in the ordeal combat, and both were disgraced. His very sword was gone; he longs for it to slay his now detested consort. He raves like a second weak blubbering Ahab before a second wily and indomitable Jezebel. The woman now shows her reserve force; she tells the disgraced noble he has been defeated by magic. Had he but grazed the body of the unknown knight he might still have been

victor, but now he could only paralyze his power by extorting the secret of his name. But one could accomplish this —Elsa, who on the morrow was to become a bride. There was not a moment to be lost. See, the music has died in the castle-halls, the revellers are gone.

484. ELSA SINGS.

Elsa will come forth presently on her balcony, to drink deep after the heated ball-room from the cool cisterns of the night. The stars are out. Hush! yonder casement opens. The Count is hurried off by his wife, who sits down on the steps with face buried apparently in her hands, but in reality with an eye as of a cat fixed on its prey, watching every motion of the snow-white figure slowly emerging, and now leaning out upon the balcony towards her.

Soft summer night, and stars that seem to beat in time to yonder palpitating heart! Sweet wandering airs that fan the hot cheeks and happy restless spirit of maiden Elsa, who in solitude, balmy and silent, seeks to possess herself, and sound with full and satisfying thought the depths of her own happiness! In her most entrancing song, that floats out into the listening night, she seems to sound and sound, and to find those depths fathomless.

The short orchestral prelude recasts, in a meditative and subdued mould, some of the elements of the last triumphal chorus, and then, clear through the balmy midsummer moonlight, steals forth that enchanting song, in its opening

phrases so strikingly like "Home, sweet home," but quite etherealised out of all resemblance to it as it proceeds.

But the snake in the dark now rears its slanderous head. Ortrud draws out of the deep shadow with a pathetic wail—"Elsa!" The startled girl is soon melted to pity for her prostrate rival, who craftily abases herself and pleads for her husband, whom she represents as deeply penitent, and eager for the royal favour of his happy rival.

485. LATET ANGUIS.

Elsa's own spirit, longing to overflow and impart happiness to all, is played upon by the sorceress, who is presently received with open arms by the trusting bride; and few can forget MADEMOISELLE TITIENS' magnificent burst of insulting malice and vengeance (during Elsa's momentary withdrawal) in which Ortrud summons the infernal gods whom she worships to accomplish her dark designs for the ruin of Elsa's love. Elsa finishes by inviting her two rivals to array themselves in splendid apparel, and grace with her the nuptial festival on the morrow. The gratitude of Ortrud now offers a return in the shape of good counsel. She artlessly advises Elsa not to marry a man she knows nothing of, but to extort the confession of his name at least; and the phrase of exalted passion in which Elsa naïvely answers the designing woman, that she cannot know what true love is if she can so suggest a doubt, is one of matchless freshness and full of tidal joy.

But the poison has nevertheless been instilled, and the pair withdraw into the castle together. Frederic now creeps from his recess, where he has listened to all,

486.
THE MORNING COMES.

utters a few strains of malignant joy. The day breaks; the long drawn-out and magnificent crisis of the second act is at hand.

With the bright glancing of the morning light upon the cathedral, palace, and market-place, the soul passes into a new phase of emotions. Now we can see the meaning of the long, gloomy duet between Frederic and Ortrud, succeeded by the finely-contrasted night-scene of Elsa's love and Ortrud's treachery. The whole atmosphere of the night, laden with oppressive and exhausting passion, confined to three individuals, has prepared us for the fresh life of the day and the busy stir and tumult of feelings, in which the individual is at first lost in the crowded scene, and then steps forth into prominence, but still to carry on his action no longer in private, but *coram populo*.

The early dawn broadens to the cheery sound of horns answering each other, call for call, from the distant turrets of the city. Troops of men and girls visit the town Well, and pass to and fro in the market-place.

And now the castle gates open, forth come the royal trumpeters and blow the herald blast, summoning from right and left the nobles and retainers, to prepare for the presence of the King and the marriage festivities of Elsa and her knight.

The straightforward chorus in which the gay groups greet each other is exhilarating, and seems to banish the last shade of night from the stage and of gloom from the heart.

487. THE CROWD ASSEMBLES.

The royal herald here steps forth, and with a flourish of trumpets announces to the hushed crowd that Frederic Telramund is an outlaw and traitor, and the people, like parrots, break out gaily into free cursing. Lohengrin is then proclaimed Guardian of Brabant, and the pliable chorus assents vociferously. The third message summons the nobles and retainers to the espousals of Elsa and the knight, which, of course, forms the subject for a longer chorus, in which the nobles profess themselves willing to follow the new Overlord to victory against the King's foes in a distant land. Observe the fine proportion of the herald's tripartite message, and the corresponding bursts of chorus which greet it. Again, the perfection of form is instinctively reached. What follows shows that acquaintance with popular movements, and that deep insight into political instincts of crowds subjected to the manipulation of agitators, of which WAGNER had some bracing experience when he himself appeared as a party orator during the rise of Saxony and the agitation of 1848.

There are always two sides to a question, and in every political movement always a reactionary minority.

No sooner has the boisterously loyal chorus ceased, than a movement is apparent in the crowd, and four nobles detach themselves from the herd. "The land we are to quit!" cries one. "Against a foe who never threatened us," replies a second. "Such rashness will bring sorrow," says a third. "But who will dare oppose the King?" asks the fourth. "I!" cries Frederic of Telramund, stepping from his hiding-place.

488. CONSPIRACY.

He has indeed struck while the iron is hot, and, with the rapid instinct of self-preservation, he levels a blow at his victim, declares that all have been duped by magical arts, and that the unknown knight must be unmasked.

The crowd is but half won, but the poison of suspicion has been dropped, and the rapid kaleidoscope has already shifted, as the conspirators mingle in the gathering crowd of nobly-clad courtiers, and four royal pages appear in scarlet, yellow, and blue satin, and from their fresh girl voices a very song of the morning, "Make way! make way!" falls like dew and sunshine. It is one of those matchless fragments of clear and effectively simple harmony of which WAGNER seems to have an inexhaustible store. The cry from the Syrens in *Tannhäuser*, and the parting salute of the chorus in the bridal chamber, are but two of a hundred other examples. The glittering crowd now parts; splendid pages, in all the colours of the rainbow, make their way some to the open

489. ENTER PAGES.

Minster door, others to range themselves on either side up the flight of steps. On the Palace balcony appear groups of beautiful children, and gaily-dressed women and cavaliers, and instalments of the royal procession are seen slowly winding from terrace to terrace, and approaching until the last flight of marble stairs lands them in the great square, which parts the procession from the Minster.

The stately music heralds in the appearance of Elsa; there is a long-drawn-out expectant sigh from the crowd, "She comes! with blushes glowing, on holy thoughts intent;" and Elsa, robed in bridal white, stands revealed to the whole assembly on the top of the Palace stairs. Then, slowly preceded and followed by her maidens, she advances in the procession, and crosses the market-place, whilst a rapturous chorus rends the air with, "Hail! Elsa of Brabant." As the strain culminates in one long shout, Elsa's foot is on the second step of the Minster stairs, when the treacherous Ortrud, who has formed one of her train, rushes forward, and pushes Elsa aside with "Stand back, Elsa! no longer will I follow you like a slave; the precedence is mine, you shall yet bow to me!" The tumult following these words, and the fierce colloquy between Elsa and Ortrud threaten to end in dire confusion; but WAGNER has the stages of development firmly in hand, and the transitions of incident and emotion never lose definite purpose and clear-

490. TREACHERY.

ness. But one thing has again to be done. Doubt, suspicion of the unknown knight, has to be sown amongst the people, and matured in the heart of Elsa. In presence of such a rabid falcon as Ortrud, the poor white dove is only too powerless. The sorceress hurls at her, and at the assembled crowd, the charge of magic against the mysterious knight, insists upon his name, and with every taunt harps upon a question to which Elsa can give no answer, until the effect of her words, supported by the disaffected minority gathering round Frederic Telramund, is also seen in the maiden's passionate assertions of her utter trust, in the midst of her growing agitation. Suddenly the King and Lohengrin are announced, and the orderly progression of the drama is displayed by Frederic now stepping forth to confront his rival, as Ortrud had dealt with hers. It is the occasion for a new emphasis of the harrowing question, "Who is the knight" to whom the fortunes of Brabant, and Elsa, the jewel of Brabant, have been handed over in a moment of popular excitement? Let him stand forth and declare himself. "Yon shining knight, who has defied my sword, I here accuse of sorcery vile!" cries Frederic. At first the King is for passing the charge by, but Frederic's vehemence begins to win the crowd. The mystic knight is forced at last to declare that Elsa alone can put that question to him, that he will answer no other.

Fatal trust in the reticence of a woman! Had she not

sworn never to ask? Could he not trust her? Heavenly trust in human frailty, how often hast thou been deceived! But a new stage has been reached. Elsa has heard; she has been shaken. The crowd expect to know. The poison is working in the blood of the bride. Frederic and Ortrud no longer care to interrupt the nuptial procession; their work is done. The organ peals forth from the open portals, and dies away in one long swell. All seems fair again. Elsa falls in tears on the breast of her knight. Ortrud stands aside with menacing arm uplifted; but in the tears of Elsa, and in the triumphant attitude of Ortrud, we read the doom of the injured bride, and the brief yet bitter ascendancy of the perfidious witch, so swiftly developed in the third and last Part.

491 POISON INSTILLED.

Act III.

There is but one more development in the character of Elsa, and the lines of the plot are complete. It is the struggle between her love and her curiosity, in which the last wins, and the *dénouement* passes to a terribly rapid close. That struggle is the centre and pith of the last act.

492. INTRODUCTION TO ACT III.

The famous introduction is instinct with the higher moral of the whole, which is inferred rather than felt out in the closing incidents of the drama. The music is all joyous stir, and knightly, chivalrous vigour. It is the shout of a

multitude, it is the triumph of Lohengrin in his accomplished mission, in which his personal feelings and his fateful love are all put aside, and the larger aspect of his public work, in delivering Elsa, breaking up the malign enchantment, and restoring the little Prince Gottfried to his adoring people, is alone entertained.

In this stirring prelude, Lohengrin, not the lover, not the rival, but only the victorious knight of the Sangrail, seems to pass for the last time, enveloped in mystic glory before us, amidst the acclamations of the people; and the martial strains ring on, long after the hero has retired into the sacred rest of Montsalvat. But the joys and the sorrows of earth love must first be traversed.

The empty bridal chamber is before us. On one side, a wide oriel window, through which we may see the summer moonlight, setting full upon the broad waters of the Scheldt. Voices—fresh voices—young girls The doors open.

493.
THE BRIDAL CHORUS.

They enter as pages bearing torches. The King, nobles, and ladies, conduct Elsa and her knight to their bridal room. No more graceful scene, no more delicate and enchanting music, has ever been devised than the famous "Faithful and true! we lead you to where love triumphant shall crown you with joy." Eight ladies now take up a new and equally enchanting strain, which is in fact a poetical version of whom God hath joined together"; and throughout the

astonishing scene that follows, there reigns that singular elevation which must for ever separate this great love duet from such sensuous emanations as GOUNOD'S duet between Faust and Marguerite, or even WAGNER'S own delineation of passion in Tristan and Isolde.

Here everything is rare and sublimated.

The breath of a divine fervour lifts the knightly love of Lohengrin into an atmosphere of resplendent purity. As the last notes of bridal music die away, and the doors are closed upon the happy pair, that long-drawn-out duet begins, which in dramatic force alone will bear comparison with the finest bursts in *Romeo and Juliet.*

Merely as a psychological study it is worth dwelling upon, although it is not easy to give any idea of the truth and power of the music. The happy strain is o'er, "We are alone, who never were alone since first we met." The first notes of Lohengrin take us from the joyous conventional view of the bridal chorus, into the immediate privacy of the lovers.

With the closing of the doors the atmosphere is shifted instantly. The melody is long drawn out, reposeful, and *intime.* He longs to know from her own lips whether she is happy. It is the old, imperious instinct, which is eager to seek a confirmation of its desire from a kindred soul.

494. *VIE INTIME.*

It must hear from other lips what it already knows, and

be thus twice blessed. "Happy!" cries Elsa, "that word my transport cannot measure!"

He is satisfied. She has given him back his feelings. He reminds her of the mystic love which brought him from the distance in her hour of need. She answers with a glimpse of her own vision. Now that she holds in her arms its realisation, it lends eloquence to her lips. She will be melted by his eyes, and flow about him like a river; she will be the little flower that kisses his feet as they move in the fresh grass.

She will live so. No, she will die, if in dying her life can become more his own. Is this love? is it all that love can say? No, it might still breathe his dear name. "Must it be for ever concealed from me?"

With the beseeching yet warning fifth from *E* to *A*—"Elsa!" Lohengrin would check her miserable rashness. But the woman is unbalanced by the intensity of her emotions, and with clinging urgency rushes on heedless. "How sweetly sounds my name from thy dear lips! but thy dear name shall never sound from mine!"

Will the spell never be broken? Will she never know? Again her lover would check her—"Oh, my sweet wife!"—

495. ONLY A WOMAN!

notes full of a sudden heart-pang. She heeds them not. She presses eagerly her face close to him, and clasps him in her arms, pleading impetuously, "Now, when none are near, whisper the word

once softly; I only shall hear it." Lohengrin rises. His pain is too great, he needs diversion for his thoughts, he will put this dreadful moment aside. He lifts her from the couch; they are both standing by the oriel casement. He pushes it wide open. The moonlight streams in, and the soft air is full of strange and mystic perfumes. The air seems to grow chill. The music of shrill triplets on flutes and clarionets is here marvellous. The lovers stand between the moonlight and the dawn.

Alas! too true. The dream of love draws to its pallid awakening. For a moment they stand and inhale the odorous gales, which come streaming towards the knight as from the aromatic shrine of Montsalvat. Thoughts of its glory rush into his mind; his ecstatic nature wakes beneath them; he speaks what seem to her wild words of magic and mystery. A vague distrust mingles with her passion. His secret is fraught perchance with danger; he is not safe in her embrace; others may have mystic claims over him. Yet for a moment she is folded in a long embrace. Oh! could her folly all be forgotten! But no! the very inner woman comes out piteously with, "Let me—let me know!" The first stern notes from the knight are her answer: "No more of this, Elsa!" But she is quite wild, weakly wild. "Tell, oh tell me thy race, name, *all*!—I will never, never, tell it to anyone." It is a situation that must so often have

496.
WHAT'S IN A NAME.

repeated itself in the sad annals of humanity—the eager insatiable curiosity of woman, wrecking her own love and the love of one dearer to her than life itself. But the deepest side of the ideal knight is now fairly aroused. The sense of his duty, and the honour of the Sangrail! Before that consummate glory even the fire of love grows pale, and he tells his bride that wavering faith shall never be forgiven.

497. AN EXCEEDING BITTER CRY.

In a moment the unhappy Elsa is melted and contrite. She falls back on the simple human side of her love, and calls him to her arms, the only spell she knows. But Lohengrin now proclaims that he belongs to a higher world, that none can add or take from the sacred order which owns his allegiance: that the bliss from whence he comes and whither he must return is ineffable, supernal.

Alas! Help! Heaven!

A cry of bitter jealous passion breaks from the frantic woman. She now feels, by a quick and sure instinct, that she is going to be left. One more typical situation. The plaint of all forsaken hearts is resumed in that despairing cry of Elsa; the time for asking his name seems past. The sense of overhanging doom is upon her. A vague terror shakes her whole frame. Is it the prophetic sense of the murderers that are even now with Frederic of Telramund, close outside her bedchamber? "Hark! there are sounds!"

the knight's quick ear has heard, but she is gazing vacantly from the casement. Another terror now seizes her. Over the flooded river brightening to the dawn she catches sight of the ominous swan that brought her champion.

"The swan! the swan!" she screams like one possessed. "As when I first beheld his pinions shine—he comes for thee!" In her mad despair, trust, caution, even love itself, seems to give way to the impetuous fury of a wild creature; and this last consummate touch of human nature is simply overpowering on the stage. In the gentlest and tenderest of women, when pushed to extremity, there is often the imperious ferocity of a tiger at bay. Like a vindictive fury she flies at him with, "Declare thy race and name! Declare thy name—thy name! Where is thy home?"

At that moment the door is burst open, the murderers rush in. Elsa has just strength and presence of mind left, as the sudden revulsion of feeling takes possession of her relaxing limbs, to hand her lover his sword before she swoons away. With a touch of that enchanted blade, Lohengrin slays Frederic Telramund, then lifts the fainting form of Elsa on to the bed. Nobles and servitors enter. The knight, lost for ever to his love, with sad and solemn calmness bids them lead Elsa to the King, and promises there, in presence of all, to declare his name and home.

498. MURDER!

From the orchestra are heard the well-known notes of

doom and mystery associated with Lohengrin's warning voice and Ortrud's spell.

499. THE KING IN COUNCIL.

The body of Frederic is removed, and a large curtain falls. The *mise-en-scène* of the prolonged duet being very shallow, a mere background against the foot-lights, the splendid vision of the broad prairie and banks of the winding Scheldt, with the hazy distant sea, is all ready, as in the opening act, to be revealed as the scene of the final situation, and almost immediately the curtain is withdrawn, and the opening pageant is again before us. The King is with his nobles under the spreading oak, the full morning sun is throbbing over river and mead. The assembling drum and trumpet music, of quite a perfunctory character, goes on for several pages, whilst the crowd distributes itself. It is an immense relief, and in its indifference rests the mind, and prepares us quite after the Shaksperean method for the exciting *dénouement* close at hand.

Mutual compliments now pass between the war-like monarch and his people. It appears that all are now prepared to join in his foreign war for the sake of Germany, and he is thanking them, when four nobles, bearing a corpse on a shrouded bier, enter and lay their burden at the King's feet. A thrill of astonishment and horror runs through the assembly as Telramund's friends are recognised in the four pall-bearers. To all inquiries they answer that

the knight, the new guardian of Brabant, has sent them there with their burden.

Elsa is now seen approaching with a train of ladies, her head downcast in deepest sorrow, and the orchestra repeats a fragment of the motive which indicates the burden of the overhanging mystery. A new commotion in the crowd, and in another moment the knight of the Grail, fully armed in shining mail, as in the first act, strides into the midst, and stands before the King by the side of the shrouded bier. He is received with acclamations as the heaven-sent hero, but at once informs the King that all is changed now, that he has been doggedly arraigned by a section of the nobles to reveal his name and nation, and that at this moment he stands accused of foul murder. With these words he tears the pall from Frederick Telramund's corpse, and declares that in self-defence he slew him. His accents have hitherto been proud and defiant, but as he nears the subject of his great personal sorrow his tone changes, as though for a moment his inner mood were coloured by a tenderer and more regretful glow of feeling. As he proceeds to recount his bride's fault of faith, he recovers himself, and prepares to make the fateful announcement which is to free his bonds on earth, deprive him of his love, and restore him to the heaven of Montsalvat. Rising to his full stature, whilst his face glows with the dignified consciousness of his high

500. ENTER ELSA.

origin, "I do not shrink from declaring my name and lineage. Ye shall know that I am more than the equal of the proudest noble here."

Then follows the masterly summary of the opening orchestral prelude, the leading parts being for the first time transferred in a consecutive melody to the hero. Then the legend of the Sangrail comes forth. The story of the shining halls of Montsalvat, with its consecrated knights; of his own mission to succour the oppressed, of the ineffable raptures of the blessed cup. The whole orchestration, now headed by the mystic knight, is like the actual unfolding in flesh and blood, or revelation to the eye of sense of what in the ethereal introduction was but an anticipatory vision.

501. "I AM LOHENGRIN."

The crystal globe has yielded up its secret. The parable of the Grail is about to be realised as the knight declares, "My father is crowned Parsifal, and I am LOHENGRIN!"

An immense emotion now takes possession of the monarch and his assembled lieges. "While I hear him," exclaims the King, "the holy tears course down my cheeks."

Poor Elsa staggers back—"'Tis all dark—dark! The earth reels! air—air—I cannot breathe!" Her fainting form is caught in Lohengrin's arms, longing, hungering for her the last time. "I felt thou wast the soul of all delight." It is almost the last touch of earthly passion. Elsa, awaking from her swoon, tries passionately to detain

him. She despairs, she repents, she will do any penance. Too late! "Alas! my sweetest wife, I must leave thee for ever." It is his only, but inexorable reply. Elsa seems stunned: worn out for a moment with the intense emotion, she lies still in his arms. The knight commits her fainting to her ladies, then turns, and explains that he cannot lead the army to war; that he must return from whence he came.

But on the distant Scheldt the portent is now seen again. Groups crowd once more, and rush to the river banks. The cry of "The swan! the swan!" resounds on all sides. Lohengrin advances to the swan, now close on the banks with the empty skiff, and greets the fair white bird with a modified form of the first magic strain, which is so widely known as the "Swan" motive. But ere he ascends the bark he unlocks the riddle of the swan, and the mystery of the vanished Gottfried, Elsa's brother. He returns for a moment to fold his lost bride in one last embrace, to tell her, that had she been true, in a year her brother would have been restored, and her husband would not have been lost to her; that now, his ring, his horn, and his sword, alone can be left with her. These she must give to her brother when he appears. They are the sure means of victory; they will constitute him the leader and Overlord of his people. He then commits himself once more to the service of the Holy Grail, and strides back to the empty bark,

502.
THE SWAN! THE SWAN!

Elsa falls prostrate. At that moment Ortrud steps forth, and exultingly confesses her wicked sorcery. *She* has enchained Gottfried under the form of a swan, and she declares that had the knight tarried another minute, the spell would have been broken, and Gottfried restored. But at that instant, whilst a burst of execration rises from the crowd, the swan vanishes—the young Gottfried rushes towards Elsa.

503. *EXIT* LOHENGRIN.

The dove of the Holy Grail flutters down, and is harnessed by Lohengrin to the bark, which moves off apace with the shining knight. With a scream of joy, Elsa falls into her brother's arms, and then catching sight of her beloved borne away on the great flood, with a wild despairing cry of "My husband!" sinks lifeless to the ground.

The consummate dramatic finish of this scene will bear the fullest analysis; it will feed the profoundest meditation. The struggle between the earthly love and the heavenly mission of the holy-knight; the serene triumph of the latter, in the midst of that ecstatic contemplation of celestial glory which fills his last long monologue; the entire, unhurried performance of his whole mission, and detailed delivery ere he goes, of the perfect plot perfectly wrought out; the tender memory of the swan; the overpowering spell that is upon him to depart, as the vision of the Grail comes, whose he is and whom he serves;

504. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY.

the crushed self-abasement of Elsa, her late repentance—too late; her illogical passion, hoping against hope to detain her knight; her exhausted emotions, waking at last only in fitful bursts, and exhibiting in the shock of their complete overthrow the phenomena of wild joy, instantly followed by the last flood of grief, in which her very life seems to exhale itself; the fateful gleam of a malignant spite, which prompts Ortrud a moment too soon to reveal her secret; the crowning vision of the Sangrail, in the shape of the heavenly dove which once a year descended to renew the potency of the sacrificial cup, and now flutters for a second before the dazed eyes of mortals, in that supreme hour of an accomplished deliverance; and lastly, the perfect close, and sense of dramatic unity left upon the mind by the departure of the shining knight, as he came, over the great water-floods, lost as soon as known—eternal symbol of the joy and tender glories that are for ever vanishing in the moment of possession; yet, in their transitory glow, leaving behind them the memory which is to feed the coming years with the bright legacy of an aspiring and insatiable hope: all this must stamp *Lohengrin* —as, indeed, every work of WAGNER'S is stamped—with an impress of earnest reality separating it from all ordinary operas, and constituting it a great poem, wedded to dramatic action and filled with noble music.

X

INTERLUDE

ON PHENOMENAL PLAYERS.

THE greatest phenomenal players of their age have undoubtedly been LISZT and PAGANINI. They were great not merely because they could play better than others, but because they created what they played. It is quite possible to maintain that RUBINSTEIN and BÜLOW play quite as well as LISZT, or that ERNST and JOACHIM are as good as PAGANINI, but it is nevertheless an absurdity and impertinence to argue the point. They were not the first—they came afterwards. A man who takes gold out of a mine may be as good as the man who discovered the mine, but he is not that man. He does excellent work, but he was not the first on the ground—he came afterwards.

505. THE *FIRST* MEN.

A thing once discovered cannot be rediscovered, and an

aureole shines round the head of the pioneer to which no subsequent traveller may lay claim. But quite apart from what is new and original in their respective contributions to Art, it is doubtful whether two such extraordinary personalities as those of PAGANINI and LISZT have ever appeared in the world of virtuosity. In some respects LISZT is even more extraordinary than PAGANINI; for, in the first place, he electrified a world still under the spell of the weird Italian's Cremona; and, in the second place, his demands have achieved for the piano what no demands of PAGANINI ever could for the violin—a profound modification and re-creation of the instrument to enable him to realise his prodigious feats of sonority and execution. The modifications introduced by violin repairers—strengthening bars ribs, glueing cracks, &c.—are trifling compared to th changes which separate the pianoforte of 1820 from that of 1880. PAGANINI is the creator of the modern violin school; but LISZT has not only created the modern pianoforte school, but in some sort the modern pianoforte.

506. LISZT AND PIANO MANUFACTURE.

Great heart, great brain, daring originality, electric organisation, iron nerve, and a soul vibrating to sound like an Æolian harp to the wind; there you have the personality, phenomenal and unique, of FRANZ LISZT.

XI.

LISZT.

WHO has not heard of LISZT? Who has heard LISZT? I suppose to most of us in England he is personally a great
507. tradition and nothing more; his compositions,
WHO HAS HEARD LISZT? indeed, form the chief *pièces de résistance* of our annual crop of pianoforte recitals, but the man and his playing are alike unknown. He has already become historical during his life-time. Only by a happy chance can I reckon myself amongst the few who have lately heard LISZT play.

I happened to be staying in Rome, and LISZT kindly invited me over to the Villa d'Este twice.

There at Tivoli, alone with him, he conversed with me of the times long gone by—of MENDELSSOHN, of PAGANINI, of CHOPIN.

There in the warm light of an Italian autumn, subdued by the dark-red curtains that hung in his study, with an old-world silence around us, he sat at his piano once more; and as he played to me the clock of time went back, and CHOPIN entered with his pale refined face, his slight aristocratic figure: HEINE sat restlessly in a dark corner;

Madame Sand reclined in the deep window-niche overlooking the desolate Campagna, with Rome in the distance; De Lammenais stood at the foot of the piano—a delicate, yet sinewy and mobile frame—with his noble eager face all aglow, his eloquent tongue silent, listening to the inspiration of another believer in another *evangelium*—the evangelium of the emotions, the Gospel of Art.

Shadows all of you, yet to me for an hour, in the deep solitude of the great Cardinal's palace alone with Liszt, more real than the men and women of our lesser day.

Liszt is the embodiment of an epoch. In religion, politics, and philosophy he represents that creative ferment through which the genius of the nineteenth century has come to the understanding and possession of itself. The Romanticism of 1830–40, with all its deplorable aberrations, its reactionary and one-sided views, its hazardous experiments, its impatience of authority, its childlike and impulsive fancy, was nevertheless a great creative period.

508. LISZT EMBODIES AN EPOCH.

Then were sown the seeds that have since germinated so gloriously in literature, and art, and politics throughout Europe. Then flourished, or at least were born, the men who impressed this century with its peculiar characteristics —its insatiable thirst for knowledge, boundless curiosity, noble upward endeavour, despairing scepticism, trembling hope, eager love of life and intense belief in itself, intuitive

convictions which every decade has done something to deepen and perhaps to justify.

It was the age of LISZT, of PAGANINI, THALBERG; of MENDELSSOHN, SCHUMANN, SPOHR, CHOPIN, WAGNER; of LAMARTINE, GEORGE SAND, ALFRED DE MUSSET, VICTOR HUGO; of BYRON, SHELLEY, COLERIDGE, SCOTT, and WORDSWORTH—age of upheaval and revolution, ferment of new life, unsettlement of old opinions. The political heavens were full of portents; the firmament of art flashing with meteors; the social world alive and palpitating with new theories of life, which mistook license for liberty—truly an age convulsed with the violence of the old aboriginal impulses suddenly let loose.

509 1811. THE COMET YEAR.

One thousand eight hundred and eleven was the year of the great comet—a year which, we are told, re-echoed with the sounds of the lyre and the sword, and announced so many pioneering spirits of the future.

In 1811 was FRANZ LISZT born. He had the hot Hungarian blood of his father, the fervid German spirit of his mother, and he inherited the lofty independence, with none of the class prejudices, of the old Hungarian nobility from which he sprang.

LISZT's father, ADAM, earned a modest livelihood as agent and accountant in the house of COUNT ESTERHAZY. In that great musical family inseparably associated with the names

of HAYDN and SCHUBERT,* ADAM LISZT had frequent opportunities of meeting distinguished musicians. The Prince's private band had risen to public fame under the instruction of the venerable HAYDN himself. The LISZTS, father and son, often went to Eisenstadt, where the Count lived; there they rubbed elbows with CHERUBINI and HUMMEL, a pupil of MOZART.

FRANZ took to music from his earliest childhood. When about five years old, he was asked what he would like to do. "Learn the piano," said the little fellow. Soon afterwards his father asked him what he would like to be; the child pointed to a print of BEETHOVEN hanging on the wall, and said, "Like him." Long before his feet could reach the pedals or his fingers stretch an octave, the boy spent all his spare time strumming, making what he called "clangs," chords, and modulations. He mastered scales and exercises without difficulty.

510. "LEARN THE PIANO."

But there was a certain intensity in all he did, which seemed to wear him out. He was attacked with fever, but would hardly be persuaded to lie down until completely exhausted; then he lay and prayed aloud to God to make him well, and vowed that on his recovery he would only make hymns and play music

511. CHARACTER.

* See my *Music and Morals*, sections 96, 106, 1st Edition.

which pleased God and his parents. The strong lines of his character early asserted themselves—religious ardour, open sincerity, a certain nobleness of soul that scorned a lie and generously confessed to a fault, quick affections, ready sympathies, a mind singularly without prejudices or antipathies, except in music. LISZT's musical antipathies are matters of world-wide notoriety; his hatred of "Conservatorium" dogma, his contempt for the musical doctrinaire, his aversion to the shallow and frivolous, his abhorrence of mere sensationalism.

512. THE WHEREWITHAL.

The boy's decided bent soon banished all thought of anything but a musical vocation, but the *res angustæ domi* stood in the way. How was he to be taught? how was he to be heard? how to earn money? That personal fascination, from which no one who has ever come in contact with LISZT has quite escaped, helped him thus early. When eight years old, he played before COUNT ESTERHAZY in the presence of six noblemen, amongst them COUNTS AMADEE, APPONYI, and SZAPARY—eternal honour to their names! They at once subscribed for him an annuity of six hundred gulden for six years. This was to help the little prodigy to a musical education.

His parents felt the whole importance of the crisis. If the boy was to prosper, the father's present retired life with a fixed income must be changed for an unsettled wandering and precarious existence. "When the six years are over,

and your hopes prove vain, what will become of us?" said his mother, who heard, with tears in her eyes, that father was going to give up the agency and settle down wherever the boy might need instruction, protection, and a home. "Mother," said the impetuous child, "what God wills!" and he added, prophetically enough, "God will help me to repay you for all your anxieties and for what you do for me." And with what results he laboured in this faith, years afterwards in Paris, we shall see.

513. THE WIDE, WIDE WORLD.

The agency was thrown up; the humble family, mother, father, son, went out alone from the little Hungarian village into an unknown and untried world, simply trusting to the genius, the will, the word of an obscure child of eight: "I will be a musician, and nothing else!"

As the child knelt at his farewell mass in the little village church of Raiding, many wept, others shook their heads, but some even then seemed to have a presentiment of his future greatness, and said, "That boy will one day come back in a glass coach." This modest symbol represented to them the idea of boundless wealth.

514. MANY MASTERS.

HUMMEL would only teach for a golden louis a lesson, and then picked his pupils; but at Vienna the father and son fell in with CZERNY, BEETHOVEN'S pupil, and the famous SALIERI, now seventy years old.

CZERNY at once took to LISZT, but refused to take anything for his instruction. SALIERI was also fascinated, and instructed him in harmony; and fortunate it was that LISZT began his course under two such strict mentors.

He soon began to resent CZERNY's method, thought he knew better and needed not those dry studies of CLEMENTI and that irksome fingering by rule; he could finger everything in half-a-dozen different ways. There was a moment when it seemed that master and pupil would have to part; but timely concessions to genius paved the way to dutiful submission, and years afterwards the great master dedicated to the rigid disciplinarian of his boyhood his *Vingt-quatre Grandes Études* in affectionate remembrance.

Young talent often splits upon the rock of self-sufficiency. Many a clever artist has failed because in the pride of youthful facility he has declined the method and drudgery of a correct technique.

Such a light as LISZT's could not be long hid; all Vienna in 1822 was talking of the wonderful boy. "Est deus in nobis," wrote the papers rather profanely. The "little Hercules," the "young giant," the boy "virtuoso from the clouds," were amongst the epithets coined to celebrate his marvellous rendering of HUMMEL's "Concerto in A" and a free "Fantasia" of his own.

515. FIRST APPEARANCES.

The Vienna Concert Hall was crowded to hear him; and

the other illustrious artists—then, as indeed they have been ever since forced to do wherever LISZT appeared—effaced themselves with as good a grace as they could.

It is a remarkable tribute to the generous nature as well as to the consummate ability of LISZT, that, whilst opposing partisans have fought bitterly over him—Thalbergites, Herzites, Mendelssohnites *versus* Lisztites—yet few of the great artists who have, one after another, had to yield to him in popularity have denied to him their admiration, while most of them have given him their friendship.

LISZT early wooed and early won Vienna. He spoke ever of his dear Viennese and their "resounding city."

When I saw LISZT at Tivoli in 1880, I remember his saying to me, "J'ai reçu le célèbre baiser de BEETHOVEN."

516. THE KISS OF BEETHOVEN.

I find that BEETHOVEN's secretary, SCHINDLER, wrote, in 1823, to BEETHOVEN: "You will be present at little LISZT's concert, will you not? It will encourage the boy. Promise me that you will go." And BEETHOVEN went. When the "little LISZT" stepped on to the platform, he saw BEETHOVEN in the front row; it nerved instead of staggering him—he played with an *abandon* and inspiration which defied criticism. Amidst the storm of applause which followed, BEETHOVEN was observed to step up on the platform, take the young virtuoso in his arms, and salute him, as LISZT assured me, "on both cheeks." This was an event not to be lightly forgotten,

and hardly after fifty-seven years to be alluded to without a certain awe; indeed, LISZT's voice quite betrayed his sense of the seriousness of the occasion as he repeated, with a certain conscious pride and gravity, "Oui, j'ai reçu le baiser de BEETHOVEN."

A concert tour on his way to Paris brought him before the critical public of Stuttgardt and Munich. HUMMEL, an old man, and MOSCHELES, then in his prime, heard him, and declared that his playing was equal to theirs. But LISZT was bent upon completing his studies in the celebrated school of the French capital, and at the feet of the old musical dictator CHERUBINI.

517. CHERUBINI AND LISZT.

The ERARDS, who were destined to owe so much to LISZT, and to whom LISZT throughout his career has owed so much, at once provided him with a magnificent piano; but CHERUBINI put in force a certain bye-law of the Conservatoire excluding foreigners, and excluded FRANZ LISZT.

This was a bitter pill to the eager student. He hardly knew how little he required such patronage. In a very short time "*le petit* LISZT" was the great Paris sensation. The old *noblesse* tried to spoil him with flattery, the DUCHESS DE BERRI drugged him with bonbons, the DUKE OF ORLEANS called him the "little MOZART." He gave private concerts at which HERZ, MOSCHELES, LAFONT, and DE BERIOT assisted. ROSSINI

518. PRODIGIOUS!

would sit by his side at the piano and applaud. He was a "miracle." The company never tired of extolling his "verve, fougue et originalité," whilst the ladies, who petted and caressed him after each performance, were delighted at his simple and graceful carriage, the elegance of his language, and the perfect breeding and propriety of his demeanour.

He was only twelve when he played for the first time at the Italian Opera, and one of those singular incidents which remind one of PAGANINI's triumphs occurred.

At the close of a *bravura cadenza* the band forgot to come in, so absorbed were the musicians in watching the young prodigy. Their failure was worth a dozen successes to LISZT. The ball of the marvellous was fairly set rolling.

GALL, the inventor of phrenology, took a cast of the little LISZT's skull; TALMA, the tragedian, embraced him publicly with effusion; and the misanthropic MARQUIS DE NOAILLES became his mentor, and initiated him into the art of painting.

In 1824 LISZT, then thirteen years old, came with his father to England; his mother returned to Austria.

519. GEORGE IV. AND LISZT.

He went down to Windsor to see GEORGE IV., who was delighted with him, and LISZT, speaking of him to me, said: "I was very young at the time, but I remember the king very well—a fine pompous-looking gentleman."

In London he met CLEMENTI, whose exercises he had so

objected to, CIPRIANI POTTER, CRAMER, also of exercise celebrity, KALKBRENNER, NEATE, then a fashionable pianist, once a great favourite of GEORGE III., and whom I remember about thirty years ago in extreme old age at Brighton. He described to me the poor old king's delight at hearing him play some simple English melodies. "I assure you, Mr. NEATE," said GEORGE III., "I have had more pleasure in hearing you play those simple airs than in all the variations and tricks your fine players affect."

GEORGE IV. went to Drury Lane on purpose to hear the boy, and commanded an encore. LISZT was also heard in the theatre at Manchester, and in several private houses.

On his return to France people noticed a change in him. He was now fourteen, grave, serious, often pre-occupied, already a little tired of praise, and excessively tired of being called "le petit LISZT." His vision began to take a wider sweep. The relation between art and religion exercised him. His mind was naturally devout. THOMAS À KEMPIS was his constant companion. "Rejoice in nothing but a good deed"; "Through labour to rest, through combat to victory"; "The glory which men give and take is transitory"—these and like phrases were already deeply engraven on the fleshly tablets of his heart. Amidst all his glowing triumphs he was

520. A CHANGE.

developing a curious disinclination to appear in public; he seemed to yearn for solitude and meditation.

In 1827 he now again hurried to England for a short time, but his father's sudden illness drove them to Boulogne, where, in his forty-seventh year, died ADAM LISZT, leaving the young FRANZ for the first time in his life, at the early age of sixteen, unprotected and alone.

521. DEATH OF HIS FATHER.

Rousing himself from the bodily prostration and torpor of grief into which he had been thrown by the death of his father, FRANZ, with admirable energy and that high sense of honour which has always distinguished him, began to set his house in order. He called in all his debts, sold his magnificent grand Erard, and left Boulogne for Paris with a heavy heart and a light pocket, but not owing a sou.

He sent for his mother, and for the next twelve years, 1828–1840, the two lived together, chiefly in Paris. There, as a child, he had been a nine-day's wonder, but the solidity of his reputation was now destined to go hand in hand with his stormy and interrupted mental and moral development.

522. CARE OF HIS MOTHER.

Such a plant could not come to maturity all at once. No drawing-room or concert-room success satisfied a heart for which the world of human emotion seemed too small,

and an intellect piercing with intuitive intelligence into the "clear-obscure" depths of religion and philosophy.

But FRANZ was young, and FRANZ was poor, and his mother had to be supported. She was his first care. Systematically, he laboured to put by a sum which would assure her of a competency, and often with his tender genial smile he would remind her of his own childish words, "God will help me to repay you for all that you have done for me." Still he laboured often wofully against the grain.

"Poverty," he writes, "that old mediator between man and evil, tore me from my solitude devoted to meditation, and placed me before a public on whom not only my own but my own mother's existence depended. Young and overstrained, I suffered painfully under the contact with external things which my vocation as a musician brought with it, and which wounded me all the more intensely that my heart at this time was filled entirely with the mystical feelings of love and religion."

Of course the gifted young pianist's connection grew rapidly. He got his twenty francs a lesson at the best houses; he was naturally a welcome guest, and from the first seemed to have the run of high Parisian society. His life was feverish, his activity irregular, his health far from strong; but the vulgar temptations of the gay capital seemed to have little attraction for his noble nature. His heart remained unspoiled.

523. UNSETTLED CONDITIONS.

He was most generous to those who could not afford to pay for his lessons, most pitiful to the poor, most dutiful and affectionate to his mother. Coming home late from some grand entertainment, he would sit outside on the staircase till morning sooner than awaken, or perhaps alarm, her by letting himself in. But in losing his father he seemed to have lost a certain method and order. His meals were irregular, so were his lessons; more so were the hours devoted to sleep.

At this time he was hardly twenty; we are not surprised anon to hear in his own words of "a female form chaste and pure as the alabaster of holy vessel"; but he adds: "Such was the sacrifice which I offered with tears to the God of Christians!"

524. A FEMALE FORM!

I will explain.

Mdlle. Caroline St. Cricq was just seventeen, lithe, slender, and of "angelic" beauty, and a complexion like a lily flushed with roses, "impressionable to beauty, to the world, to religion, to God." The Countess, her mother, appears to have been a charming woman, very partial to Liszt, whom she engaged to instruct Mademoiselle in music.

The lessons were not by time, but by inclination. The young man's eloquence, varied knowledge, ardent love of literature, and flashing genius won both the mother and daughter. Not one of them seemed to suspect the whirlpool of grief and death to which they were hurrying. The

Countess fell ill and died, but not before she had recommended LISZT to the COUNT ST. CRICQ as a possible suitor for the hand of Mademoiselle.

The haughty diplomat ST. CRICQ at once put his foot down. The funeral over, LISZT's movements were watched. They were innocent enough. He was already an *enfant de la maison*, but one night he lingered reading aloud some favourite author to Mademoiselle a little too late. He was reported by the servants, and received his polite dismissal as music master.

In an interview with the Count his own pride was deeply wounded. "Difference of rank!" said the Count. That was quite enough for LISZT. He rose, pale as death, with quivering lip, but uttered not a word.

As a man of honour he had but one course. He and CAROLINE parted for ever. She contracted later an uncongenial marriage; he seems to have turned with intense ardour to religion. His good mother used to complain to those who came to inquire for him that he was all day long in church, and had ceased to occupy himself, as he should, with music.

525. LOVE AND GRIEF.

Love, grief, religion, all struggling together for victory in that young and fervid spirit, at last seemed to fairly exhaust him. His old haunts knew him not; his pupils were neglected; he saw no friends; shut himself up in his room; and at last would only

see his mother at meals. He never appeared in the streets, and not unnaturally ended by falling dangerously ill.

It was at this time that Paris was one morning startled with the following newspaper announcement:

"DEATH OF YOUNG LISZT.

526.

"DEATH OF YOUNG LISZT."

"Young LISZT died at Paris—the event is painful—at an age when most children are at school. He had conquered the public," &c.

So wrote the *Étoile*. In fact, he was seriously ill. M. VON LENZ, BEETHOVEN'S biographer, went to visit him. He was lying pale, haggard, and apathetic; could hardly be roused to converse except occasionally when music cropped up. Then his eye brightened for a moment like the "flashing of a dagger in the sun."

In 1830 the Revolution burst on Paris. This, it seems, was needed to arouse LISZT. The inner life was suddenly to be exchanged for the outer. Self was to be merged in the larger interests, some of them delusions, which now began to pose again under the cunning watchwords of "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité." Generous souls saw in the quarrel of CHARLES X. with his people the hope of a new national life. They proposed to exchange the old and effete "Divine right" for the legitimate "sovereignty of the people." "C'est le canon qui l'a

527.

REVOLUTION AND RESURRECTION.

guéri!" his mother used to say. LISZT was hardly restrained by her tears and entreaties from rushing to the barricades. The cure threatened to be worse than the disease. The heroic deeds of the "great week" inflamed him, and he shouted with the rest for the silver-haired GENERAL LAFAYETTE, "genius of the liberties of two worlds."

528. PAGANINI AND THE AGE.

The republican enthusiasm, so happily restrained from action out of affection for his dependent mother, found a more wholesome vent in a vigorous return to his neglected art. Just as he was busy revolving great battle symphonies, his whole artistic nature received a decisive and startling impulse from the sudden apparition of PAGANINI in Paris. Preceded by revolution and cholera, this weird man had come upon the bright city that had sinned and suffered so much, and found her shaken and demoralised, but still seething with a strange ferment of new life in which Saint-Simonianism, communism, and scepticism, side by side with fanaticism, piety, and romance, struggled to make confusion worse confounded. Into the depths of what has been called the Romantic movement of 1830–40 it is not my purpose here to enter. There was war alike with the artificial hum-drum of the old French world and the still more artificial revival of the classical world of Greece and Rome.

The human spirit was at length to be liberated; no one,

it was held, need believe anything that did not happen to commend itself to his fancy or passion. As HEINE put it: "The great God, it appeared, was not at all the being in whom our grandmothers had trusted; he was, in fact, none other than you yourself." No one need be bound by the morals of an effete civilisation. In Love the world of sentiment alone must decide our actions. Everyone must be true to nature. All men were brothers, and women should have equal and independent rights. The social contract, most free and variable, must be substituted for marriage, community of goods for hereditary possessions, philosophy for law, and romance for religion. The beautiful and pregnant seeds of truth that lay imbedded in the teeming soil of this great movement have since fully germinated; its extravagances have already, to a great extent, been outgrown.

In spite of theories disastrous to political and social order, the genius of MADAME SAND, VICTOR HUGO, and A. DE MUSSET, sceptic and sensualist as he was, have rescued the movement from the despair of raw materialism, and produced works of immortal beauty and spiritual significance.

They helped the European spirit to recover its independence, they reacted against the levelling tyranny of the first NAPOLEON, and were largely instrumental in undermining the third NAPOLEON'S throne of gilded lead. Stained with licence and full of waywardness, it was, nevertheless, an age

of great and strong feelings—an age volcanic, vivid, electric. Such an age eagerly welcomed the magicians who set the language of emotion free, and gave to music its myriad wings and million voices.

PAGANINI appeared. The violin was no more the violin. A new transcendent *technique* made it the absolute minister of an emancipated and fantastic will. The extraordinary power exercised by the Italian violinist throughout Europe was quickened by the electric air which he breathed. The times were ripe. He stood before kings and people as the very emotional embodiment of the *Zeitgeist.* He was the emancipated demon of the epoch, with power to wield the sceptre of sound, and marshal in strange and frenzied legions the troubled spirits of the time.

When LISZT heard PAGANINI, it seemed to him to be the message for which he had been waiting. From him he doubtless received that passion for "transcendant execution," that absolute perfection of *technique,* which enabled him to create the modern pianoforte school, and win for ERARD and BROADWOOD what PAGANINI won for STRADIVARIUS and JOSEPH GUARNERIUS. His transcriptions of PAGANINI'S studies, the *arpeggio,* the *fioriture,* the prodigious *attaque* and *élan* that took audiences by storm, the meetings of extremes which abolished the spaces on the pianoforte key-board by making the hands ubiquitous—these and other "developments" were doubtless inspired by the prodigious feats of PAGANINI.

Liszt now suddenly retired from the concert-room. He was no longer heard in public; he seemed disinclined,

529. LISZT WITHDRAWS HIMSELF.

except in the presence of his intimates, to exhibit his wondrous talent; but he retired to perfect himself, to work up and work out the new impulses which he had received from Paganini.

He thus early laid deep the foundations of his unique virtuosity; and when he reappeared in public, he seemed to mount at once to that solitary pinnacle of fame and surpassing excellence to which the greatest pianists then and ever since have looked up in admiring and despairing wonder. Tausig said, "We are all blockheads by the side of Liszt." Rubinstein has often declared Liszt's perfection of art and wealth of resource to be simply unrivalled.

For a short time in his absence at Paris, it was thought that Thalberg would prove a formidable opponent. But

530. LISZT AND THALBERG.

Liszt had only to reappear, and Thalberg himself was forced to join in the general applause. When between the various schools there was war, it was carried on by the partisans of the great men. Although they freely criticised one another, nothing is more remarkable than the kindly personal feeling which obtained between Liszt and his natural enemies, the great pianists of the age, Moscheles, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Thalberg.

There were no doubt cabals, and at one time in Paris he

met with much detraction, but he seemed to move in a region of lofty courtesy in which squabbling for precedence was out of place; and his generosity of heart and genial recognition of others' talent disarmed criticism and silenced malice.

With the outburst of the Revolution, with the appearance of PAGANINI, came also to LISZT a violent reaction against the current religious ideas and the whole of the Catholic teaching. Reading had opened his eyes; the Catholic system seemed to him not only inadequate, but false. He required a freer atmosphere, one rather more interpretative of human facts and human nature; he thought he found it in the doctrines of the Saint-Simonians. The "Nouveau Christianisme," by far the best of ST. SIMON'S lucubrations, seemed to show that the Church had misrepresented and outraged the religion of CHRIST. It failed to take due account of art and science, had no sympathy with progress, refused altogether to assimilate the *Zeitgeist*, and had evidently ceased to lead the thinkers or purify the masses.

531. REACTION.

About this time LISZT came across the eloquent and gifted ABBÉ DE LAMENNAIS. This man it was who, more than any other, saved LISZT from drifting into the prevailing whirlpool of atheism. The heterodox Abbé, who himself had broken with the

532. LISZT AND DE LAMENNAIS.

retrograde religion of Rome, re-formulated his system, and discovered for him what at that time he most craved for—a link between his religion and his art.

"Art," said DE LAMENNAIS, "is in man what creative power is in GOD." Art is the embodiment of eternal types. Nature suggests a beauty she never completely realises. Only *in the soul of man* is the supernal beauty mirrored as it exists *in the mind of God.* Art is the soul's formula for the expression of its inner life. "Art, therefore, is an expression of GOD; her works are an infinite manifold reflection of Him.'

533. THE MISSION OF ART.

The mission of art to reveal the secrets of the inner life, to lift the souls of others into high communion with itself, to express its joy in possession, its hope of attainment, its instiable and divine longings, its dreams of the infinite—these seemed to LISZT high functions, enriching, fertilising, and consoling all life, and leading the spirit forth into that weird border-land of the emotions, where voices come to it from the Unseen, and radiant flashes from behind the Veil.

534. LISZT AND CHOPIN.

It was towards the close of 1831 that LISZT met CHOPIN in Paris. From the first, these two men, so different, became fast friends. CHOPIN'S delicate, retiring soul found a singular delight in LISZT'S strong and imposing personality. LISZT'S exquisite per-

ception enabled him perfectly to live in the strange dream-land of CHOPIN's fancies, whilst his own vigour inspired CHOPIN with nerve to conceive those mighty Polonaises that he could never properly play himself, and which he so gladly committed to the keeping of his prodigious friend. LISZT undertook the task of interpreting CHOPIN to the mixed crowds which he revelled in subduing, but from which his fastidious and delicately-strung friend shrank with something like aversion.

From CHOPIN, LISZT and all the world after him got that *tempo rubato,* that playing with the duration of notes without breaking the time, and those arabesque ornaments which are woven like fine embroidery all about the pages of CHOPIN'S nocturnes, and which lift what in others are mere casual flourishes into the dignity of interpretative phrases and poetic commentaries on the text.

People were fond of comparing the two young men who so often appeared in the same salons together—LISZT with his finely-shaped, long, oval head and *profile d'ivoire,* set proudly on his shoulders, his stiff hair of dark blonde thrown back from the forehead without a parting, and cut in a straight line, his *aplomb,* his magnificent and courtly bearing, his ready tongue, his flashing wit and fine irony, his genial *bonhomie* and irresistibly winning smile; and CHOPIN, also with dark blonde hair, but soft as silk parted on one side, to use LISZT's own words, "an angel of fair countenance with brown eyes, from which intellect

beamed rather than burned, a gentle, refined smile, slightly aquiline nose, a delicious, clear, almost diaphonous complexion, all bearing witness to the harmony of a soul which required no commentary beyond itself."

535. LISZT ON CHOPIN.

Nothing can be more generous or more true than LISZT's recognition of CHOPIN's independent support. "To our endeavours," he says, "to our struggles, just then so much needing certainty, he lent us the support of a calm, unshakable conviction, equally armed against apathy and cajolery." There was only one picture on the walls of CHOPIN's room; it hung just above his piano. It was a head of LISZT.

The over-intensity of LISZT's powerful nature may have occasionally led him into extravagances of virtuosity, which laid him open to some just criticism. ROBERT SCHUMANN observed acutely: "It appears as if the sight of CHOPIN brought him again to his senses."

536. THE ELEMENTS OF THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.

It is no part of my present scheme to describe the battle which romanticism in music waged against the prevalent conventionalities. We know the general outcome of the struggle culminating, after the most prodigious artistic convulsions, in the musical supremacy of RICHARD WAGNER, who certainly marks firmly and broadly enough the greatest stride in musical development made since BEETHOVEN.

That HECTOR BERLIOZ emancipated the orchestra from all previous trammels, and dealt with sound at first-hand as the elemental and expressional breath of the soul, that he was thus the immediate precursor of WAGNER, who said with more modesty than truth, "I have invented nothing," this is now admitted. That SCHUMANN was afraid of the excesses into which the romantic musicians threatened to plunge, and, having started well and cheered them on, showed some tendency to relapse into old form at the moment when his ingenious and passionate soul sank into final and premature gloom—that has been whispered. That MENDELSSOHN was over-wedded to classical tradition and a certain passion for neatness and precision which prevented him from sounding the heights and depths of the revolutionary epoch in the midst of which he moved, and by which his sunny spirit was so little affected—this I am now able to see. That SPOHR was too doctrinaire and mannered, MEYERBEER a great deal too fond of melo-drama and sensation for its own sake, that ROSSINI and AUBER, exclusively bent on amusing the public, were scarcely enough *hommes sérieux* to influence the deeper development of harmony, or effect any revolution in musical form, most musicians will allow; and that LISZT by his unique virtuosity has made it difficult for the world to accept him in any other capacity, is the constant grievance paraded by his admirers. From all which reflections it may be inferred that many workers have contributed to the wealth, resource, and

emancipation of modern music from those trammels which sought to confine its spirit or limit its freedom. Through past form, it has at length learned to use instead of being used by form. The modern orchestra has won the unity and spontaneity of an independent living organism. Like the body, it is a complex mechanism, but it is to the mind of the composer as the human body is to the soul. It has grown so perfect an instrument, and deals with so perfectly mastered an art, that a prelude like *Lohengrin* or the opening of *Parsifal* sounds like the actual expression of the inner moods of the spirit rendered outwardly with automatic unconscious fidelity. The rule, the *technique*, are lost, hidden, forgotten, because completely efficacious, and subordinated to the free movements of the composer's spirit.

To this latest triumph of the musical art three men since BEETHOVEN have mainly contributed; their names are certainly HECTOR BERLIOZ, WAGNER, and LISZT.

537. LISZT AND THE BEGGARS.

The darling of the aristocracy, accustomed from his earliest youth to mix freely with the *haute noblesse* of Germany and France, LISZT was a republican at heart. He felt acutely for the miseries of the people, and he was always a great player for the masses. "When I play," he once said, "I always play for the people in the top gallery, so that those who can pay but five groschen for their seats may also

get something for their money." He was ever foremost in alleviating the sufferings of the poor, the sick, and the helpless. He seems, indeed, to have been unable to pass a beggar, and the beggars soon find that out; they will even intrude upon his privacy and waylay him in his garden.

Once, when at the height of his popularity in Paris, a friend found him holding a crossing-sweeper's broom at the corner of the street. "The fact is," said Liszt simply, "I had no small change for the boy, so I told him to change me five francs, and he asked me to hold his broom for him till he returned." I forgot to ask Liszt whether the lad ever came back.

I was walking with him one day in the private gardens of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli when some little ruffians, who had clambered over the wall, rushed up to him with a few trumpery weeds, which they termed "bouquets." The benevolent Maestro took the gift good-humouredly, and fumbling in his pocket, produced several small coins, which he gave to the urchins, turning to me apologetically: "They expect it, you know. In fact," he added, with a little shrug, "whenever I appear they *do* expect it." His gifts were not always small. He could command large sums of money at a moment's notice. The proceeds of many a splendid concert went to manufacturing committees. widows, orphans, sick and blind. He founded pensions and provided funds for poor musicians; he set up monu-

ments to great artists. A pecuniary difficulty arising about BEETHOVEN'S statue at Bonn, LISZT immediately guaranteed the whole sum. In the great commercial crisis of 1834 at Lyons LISZT gave concerts for the artisans out of work; and in Hungary, not long after, when the overflow of the Danube rendered hundreds homeless, LISZT was again to the fore with his brilliant performances for charity.

All through his life he was an ardent pamphleteer, and he fought not only for the poor, but in the highest interests of his art, and above all for the dignity of his own class. In this he was supported by such musical royalties as MENDELSSOHN, ROSSINI, PAGANINI, and LABLACHE. We have heard how in past days the musicians were not expected to mix with the company, a rope being laid down on the carpet, showing the boundary line between the sacred and profane in social rank.

538. THE DIGNITY OF ARTISTS.

On one occasion LABLACHE, entering the music saloon at a certain great house, observed the usual rope laid down in front of him when he came on to sing in a duet. He quietly stooped down and tossed it aside. It was never replaced, and the offensive practice dropped out of London society from that day.

LISZT refused to play at the court of QUEEN ISABELLA in

Spain because the court etiquette forbade the introduction of musicians to royalty. In his opinion even crowned heads owed a certain deference and homage to the sovereignties of art, and he determined it should be paid.

539. LISZT, CZAR NICHOLAS, AND LOUIS-PHILIPPE.

He met CZAR NICHOLAS I., who had very little notion of the respect due to anyone but himself, with an angry look and a defiant word; he tossed FREDERICK WILLIAM IV.'s diamonds into the side scenes; and broke a lance with LOUIS-PHILIPPE, which cost him a decoration.

He never forgave that thrifty king for abolishing certain musical pensions and otherwise snubbing art. He refused on every occasion to play at the Tuileries. One day the King and his suite paid a "private view" visit to a pianoforte exhibition of ERARD'S. LISZT happened to be in the room, and was trying a piano just as His Majesty entered. The King advanced genially towards him and began a conversation; but LISZT merely bowed with a polished but icy reserve.

"Do you still remember," said the King, "that you played at my house when you were but a boy and I DUKE OF ORLEANS? Much has changed since then."

"Yes, Sire," replied LISZT dryly, "but not for the better."

The King showed his royal appreciation of the repartee by striking the great musician's name off the list of those who were about to receive the cross of the Legion of Honour.

The idol of Parisian drawing-rooms at a most susceptible age, with his convictions profoundly shaken in Catholicism and Church discipline, surrounded by wits and philosophers who were equally sceptical about marriage and the very foundations of society as then constituted, LISZT's views of life not unnaturally underwent a considerable change.

540. LISZT AND GEORGE SAND.

He had no doubt frankly and sincerely imbibed MME. SAND's early philosophy, and his witty saying, which reminds me of something of the kind in Rasselas, that "whether a man marries or not, he will sooner or later be sure to repent it," belongs to this period. His relations with MME. SAND have been much misrepresented. He was far more attracted by her genius than by her person, and although for long years he entertained for her feelings of admiration and esteem, she never exercised over him the despotic influence which drove poor CHOPIN to despair.

Of the misguided Countess who threw herself upon his protection, and whom he treated with the utmost consideration and forbearance for several years, I shall not have much to say; but it must be remembered that he was considerably her junior, that he did his best to prevent her from taking the rash course which separated her from her family and made her his travelling companion, and that years afterwards her own husband, as well as her brother, when affairs came to be

541. THE COUNTESS D'AGOULT.

arranged and the whole facts of the case were canvassed in a *conseil de famille* at Paris, confessed of their own accord that throughout LISZT had acted "like a man of honour."

It was during his years of travel with the COUNTESS D'AGOULT in Italy and Germany that LISZT composed the great bulk of his celebrated transcriptions of songs and operatic pieces, as well as the renowned *Etudes d'Exécution Transcendante.*

542. "LISZT OR THE DEVIL."

LISZT's attempt to preserve his *incognito* in Italy conspicuously failed. He entered RICORDI's music-shop at Milan, and, sitting down at a grand piano, began to improvise. "'Tis LISZT or the devil!" he heard RICORDI whisper to a clerk, and in another moment the great Italian *entrepreneur* had welcomed the Hungarian *virtuoso* and placed his villa, his box at the opera, his carriage and horses at his disposal. Of course RICORDI very soon organised a concert, in which the Milanese were invited to judge the "pianist of the future," as he was then styled. The Milanese were better pleased with LISZT than was LISZT with the Milanese. He could not make them take to BEETHOVEN. They even kicked at certain favourite studies of his own, but he won them by his marvellous improvisations on fragments of their darling ROSSINI, and afterwards wrote a smart article in the Paris *Gazette Musicale*, expressing his dissatisfaction with

the frivolity of Italian musical culture, quoting in scorn a voice from the pit which greeted one of his own "Preludes Études"—it was the word "étude" at which the pit stuck —"Vengo al teatro per divertirmi e non per studiare," a sentiment which I think I have heard repeated in more northern latitudes.

543. LISZT'S CHALLENGE TO MILAN.

Of course LISZT's free criticism got back to Milan. Milan was furious. LISZT was at Venice. The papers denounced him. Everybody proposed to fight duels with him. He was told that he could not play the piano, and they handed him over to the devil. LISZT wrote pacifying letters in the Milanese papers, but the uproar only increased. What would happen if he ever dared to show himself in Milan again, no one dared to speculate. He was a monstrous ingrate; he had insulted everyone down to the decorators and chorographers of La Scala, and he must be chastised summarily for his insolent presumption.

When the disturbance was at its height, LISZT wrote to the Milanese journals to say that he declined a paper war; that he had never intended to insult the Milanese; that he would arrive shortly in Milan and hold himself in readiness to receive all aggrieved persons, and give them every explanation and satisfaction they might require.

On a hot summer's day he drove quietly through Milan in an open carriage, and, taking up his abode at a fashionable

hotel, awaited the arrival of the belligerents. But as not one of them turned up or made the least sign, LISZT went back to Venice.

When, however, in fulfilment of a promise, he returned in September, he met with a characteristic snub, for his concert was poorly attended, and then only by the upper classes. He had mortally wounded the people. He did not consider MERCADANTE and BELLINI so great as BEETHOVEN, and he said so. This was indeed a crime, and proved clearly that he could not play the piano!

544. DISILLUSION.

Towards the year 1840 the relations between LISZT and the COUNTESS D'AGOULT had become rather strained. The inevitable dissolution which awaits such alliances was evidently at hand. For a brief period on the shores of the Lake of Como the cup of his happiness had indeed seemed full; but *es war ein Traum*. "When the ideal form of a woman," so he wrote to a friend, "floats before your entranced soul—a woman whose heaven-born charms bear no allurements for the senses, but only wing the soul to devotion—if you see at her side a youth sincere and faithful in heart, weave these forms into a moving story of love, and give it the title *On the Shores of the Lake of Como*."

He wrote, we may be sure, as he then felt. He was sometimes mistaken, but he was always perfectly open, upright, and sincere.

A little daughter was born to him at Bellaggio, on the shores of that enchanted lake. He called her COSIMA in memory of Como. She became afterwards the wife of VON BÜLOW, then the wife and widow of RICHARD WAGNER.

But in 1840 the change came. The Countess and her children went off to Paris, and the roving spirit of the great musician, after being absorbed for some time in composition, found its restless rest in a new series of triumphs. After passing through Florence, Bologna, and Rome, he went to Bonn, then to Vienna, and entered upon the last great phase of his career as a virtuoso, which lasted from 1840 to between 1850–60.

545. ITALY, AUSTRIA, RUSSIA.

In 1842 LISZT visited Weimar, Berlin, and then went to Paris. He was meditating a tour in Russia. Pressing invitations reached him from St. Petersburg and Moscow. The most fabulous accounts of his virtuosity had raised expectation to its highest pitch. He was as legendary even amongst the common people as PAGANINI.

His first concert at St. Petersburg realised the then unheard-of sum of £2,000. The roads were crowded to see him pass, and the corridors and approaches to the Grand Opera blocked to catch a glimpse of him.

The same scenes were repeated at Moscow, where he gave six concerts without exhausting the popular excitement.

On his return to Weimar he accepted the post of Kapell-

meister to the GRAND DUKE. It provided him with that settled abode, and above all with an orchestra, which he now felt so indispensable to meet his growing passion for orchestral composition. But the time of rest had not yet come.

546. BEETHOVEN'S STATUE.

In 1844 and 1845 he was received in Spain and Portugal with incredible enthusiasm, after which he returned to Bonn to assist at the inauguration of BEETHOVEN'S statue. With boundless liberality he had subscribed more money than all the princes and people of Germany put together to make the statue worthy of the occasion and the occasion worthy of the statue.

547. LISZT'S PRINCELY MUNIFICENCE.

The golden river which poured into him from all the capitals of Europe now freely found a new vent in boundless generosity. Hospitals, poor and needy, patriotic celebrations, the dignity and interests of art, were all subsidised from his private purse.

His transcendent virtuosity was only equalled by his splendid munificence; but he found what others have so often experienced—that great personal gifts and prodigious *éclat* cannot possibly escape the poison of envy and detraction. He was attacked by calumny; his very gifts denied and ridiculed; his munificence ascribed to vainglory, and his charity to pride and ostentation; yet none will ever know the extent of his private charities, and no one who knows anything of LISZT can be ignorant of the simple, unaffected

goodness of heart which prompts them. Still he was wounded by ingratitude and abuse. It seemed to check and paralyse for the moment his generous nature.

548. DEJECTION AND REVIVAL.

Fétis saw him at Coblenz soon after the Bonn festival, at which he had expended such vast sums. He was sitting alone, dejected and out of health. He said he was sick of everything, tired of life, and nearly ruined. But that mood never lasted long with Liszt; he soon arose and shook himself like a lion. His detractors slunk away into their holes, and he walked forth victorious to refill his empty purse and reap new laurels. His career was interrupted by the stormy events of 1848. He settled down for a time at Weimar, and it was then that he began to take that warm interest in Richard Wagner which ended in the closest and most enduring of friendships.

549. WAGNER.

He laboured incessantly to get a hearing for the *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser*. He forced Wagner's compositions on the band, on the Grand Duke; he breasted public opposition and fought nobly for the eccentric and obscure person who was chiefly known as a political outlaw and an inventor of extravagant compositions which it was impossible to play or sing, and odiously unpleasant to listen to.

[illegible]ut years of faithful service, mainly the service and

immense *prestige* and authority of LISZT, procured WAGNER a hearing, and paved the way for his glorious triumphs at Bayreuth in 1876, 1882, and 1883.

LISZT AT SEVENTY-TWO.

550. At the age of seventy-two LISZT retained the wit and vivacity of forty. He passed from Weimar to Rome, to Pesth, to Berlin, to Vienna, but objected to cross the sea, and told me that he would never again visit England. Latterly he seldom touched the piano, but loved to be surrounded by young aspirants to fame. To them he was prodigal of hints, and ever ready to lavish all sorts of kindness upon people who were *sympathique* to him.

At unexpected moments, in the presence of some timid young girl overpowered with the honour of an introduction, or alone with a friend when old days were spoken of, would LISZT sit down for a few minutes and recall a phrase of CHOPIN or a quaint passage from SCARLATTI, and then, forgetting himself, wander on until a flash of the old fire came back to his eyes as he struck a few grand octaves, and then, just as you were lost in contemplation of that noble head with its grand profile and its cascade of white hair, and those hands that still seemed to be the absolutely unconscious and effortless ministers of his fitful and despotic will, the master would turn away—break off, like one suddenly *blasé*, in the middle of a bar, with "Come, let us take a little walk; it will be cool under the trees"; and he would

have been a bold man who ventured in that moment to allude to the piano or music.

I saw LISZT but six times, and then only between the years 1876 and 1881. I have heard him play upon two occasions only, then he played certain pieces of CHOPIN at my request and a new composition by himself. I have heard MME. SCHUMANN, BÜLOW, RUBINSTEIN, MENTER, and ESSIPOFF, but I can understand that saying of TAUSIG, himself one of the greatest masters of *technique* whom Germany has ever produced: "No mortal can measure himself with LISZT. He dwells alone upon a solitary height."

* * * * *

(*A Leaf from my Diary.*)

551. I ENTER THE VILLA D'ESTE.

As I drove (in the autumn of 1880) through the groves of olives brightening with crude berries that clothe the slopes of Tivoli, and entered the gateway which leads up to the ducal Villa d'Este, it was with something of the feeling of a pilgrim who approaches a shrine. Two massive doors open on to a monastic cloister, and the entrance to the villa itself is out of the cloisters, just as the rooms are entered from the cloister of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Here for six years past in the autumn LISZT has led a retired life, varied by occasional excursions to Rome.

I was conducted up a staircase which opened on to a lofty terrace, and thence into a side room, whilst the Swiss valet disappeared to summon the Abbate LISZT. In another moment I saw a side door open, and the venerable figure of LISZT, already for years engraven on my heart, advanced towards me.

It was the same noble and commanding form—with the large finely-chiselled features, the restless glittering eye still full of untamed fire, the heavy white hair, thick mantling on the brow and cropped square only where it reached the shoulders, down which I can well imagine it might have continued to flow unchecked like a snowy cataract.

He came forward with that winning smile of *bonhomie* which at once invites cordiality, and drew me to him with both hands, conducting me at once into a little inner sitting-room with a window opening on to the distant Campagna.

552. KIND ENQUIRIES.

The room was dark, and completely furnished with deep red damask—cool and shadowy contrast to the burning sunshine of Italy. After alluding to our last meeting in WAGNER'S house at Bayreuth, which recalled also the name of WALTER BACHE, who has worked so bravely for LISZT'S music in England, he said, "Now tell me, how is BACHE? I have a particular, quite particular, regard for BACHE; he stayed with me here some years ago, and he has been very steadfast in

presenting my works in England; and tell me, how is Victor Hugo? and have you seen Renan lately?" I was overwhelmed by these inquiries and the like. I could not give him very good accounts of M. Hugo, whose health I feared was declining; but I said that the last evening I had spent with him in Paris, he had received up to twelve at night, and seemed full of life; although his hours were, as a rule, much earlier now. Of M. Renan I could, of course, speak much more fully, as he had recently been a good deal with me in England. "Renan took me to M. Hugo's when I was in Paris, and we had a delightful evening," he remarked. After asking after a few other personal friends, he said, "I am glad to see you here. At this time I have a little more leisure. I escape to this retreat for rest. At Rome I am besieged (*obsédé*) by all sorts of people, with whom I do not care to entertain particular relations—why should I? what have we in common?—they come out of curiosity to stare, that is all; and even here I am worried with callers, who have no interest for me"; and indeed it was current in Rome that the Abbate Liszt would receive no one at Tivoli; and especially ladies were not admitted. I was, therefore, much gratified when he said to me, "You are married—why did not you bring your wife? Come again with her." And so I did; and on my next visit Liszt offered us each an arm. He was much taller than either of us, and, looking down with a paternal air, said, "Come, my children, I will show

you over the garden." But on my first visit to the Villa d'Este I was alone.

553. A GLORIOUS VIEW.

I could not help admiring the situation of the Villa. "Indeed," said LISZT, "this is quite a princely residence; it is rented by the CARDINAL HOHENLÖHE, with whom I have had very old and friendly relations; he is good enough to apportion it to me in the autumn; you see his picture hangs there. The place is quite a ruin. It belongs to the DUKE OF MODENA, but of course they can't keep it up now: the Cardinal spent £2,000 to make it habitable. You shall see presently, the terraces are rather rough; I don't often go about the place, but I will come out with you now, and show you some points of view. I lunch about one o'clock; you will stay, and put up with the *hospitalité de garçon.*"

He then led me to the window. Down the slope of a precipitous mountain stretched the Villa d'Este gardens; tall cypress-trees marked the lines of walk and terrace; groves of olive, between which peeped glittering cascades and lower parterres, studded here and there with a gleaming statue, and tall jets of water, eternally spouting, fed from the Marcian springs; the extremity of the park seemed to fade away, at an immense depth, into the billowy Campagna.

It was like an enchanted scene; from the contemplation of which I was roused by the Abbate taking my arm, and,

passing through several ante-chambers, we emerged on to the raised terrace, which commanded one of the most striking views in Italy, or the world.

"Round to the left," said LISZT, "lies Hadrian's Villa; and perhaps your eyes are good enough to see St. Peter's yonder in the horizon." The grey mist hung at a distance of eighteen miles over the straggling buildings of distant Rome; but they gleamed out here and there. Beyond these wooded flanks of the mountain; beyond the ruins of villas where MÆCENAS and HORACE and the ANTONINES held their revels; beyond the rushing murmur of cascades and fountains; never silent, yet ever making a low and slumbrous melody, lay the Campagna like a vast lake, over which the shadow of cloud and flicker of sunlight swept and faded out: and again, beyond the Campagna, loomed the Eternal City with its mighty dome.

We seemed lifted into the upper air, as on the spacious summit of a lofty precipice; the dry vine-leaves hung about the trellised parapets, and the Virginian creeper was just beginning to redden.

554. INTO THE GARDEN.

LISZT was silent. As I looked at the noble and expressive features, never quite in repose, and strongly marked with the traces of those immense emotions which have been embodied by him in his great orchestral preludes, and thundered by him through every capital in Europe, in the marvellous per-

formances of his earlier days, I could not help saying, "If you do not find rest here, you will rest nowhere on earth"; it was indeed a realm of unapproachable serenity and peace. Then we descended by winding ways, pausing in the long walk, thickly shaded with olive-trees and the beloved ilex, where fifty lions' heads spout fifty streams into an ancient moss-grown tank.

"It is," said LISZT, "a retreat for summer; you can walk all day about these grounds, and never fear the sun—all is shade. But come down lower"; and so we went, at times turning round to look down an avenue, or to catch, through the trees, a peep of the glowing horizon behind.

Presently we came to a central space, led into by four tall cypress-groves. Here, up from a round sheet of water in front of us, leapt four jets to an immense height; and here we rested, whilst the Abbate gave me some account of this Villa or Château d'Este, and its former owners, which differed not greatly from what may be found in most guide-books.

555. A CHAT ON BELLS.

As we re-ascended, the bell of Sta. Croce, in the tall campanile over the cloisters which form part of the Villa d'Este, rang out a quarter to one. It was a bad bell, like most Italian bells, and I naturally alluded to the superiority of Belgium bells, above all others. Rather to my surprise, LISZT said, "Yes, but how are they played? I remember being much struck by

the Antwerp carillon." I described to him the mechanism of the carillon claveçin and tambour, and reminded him that the Antwerp carillon was much out of tune, Bruges being superior, as well as of heavier calibre, and Mechlin bearing off the palm for general excellence. We stopped short on one of the terraces, and he seemed much interested with a description I gave him of a performance by the great carilloneur M. DENYN at Mechlin, and which reminded me of RUBINSTEIN at his best. He expressed surprise when I alluded to VAN DEN GHEYN'S compositions for bells, laid out like regular fugues and organ voluntaries, and equal in their way to BACH or HANDEL, who were contemporaries of the great Belgian organist and carilloneur. "But," he said, "the Dutch have also good bells. I was once staying with the King in Holland, and I believe it was at Utrecht that I heard some bell-music which was quite wonderful." I have listened myself to that Utrecht carillon, which is certainly superior, and is usually well-handled.

556. LISZT PLAYS TO ME.

We had again reached the upper terrace, where the Abbate's midday repast was being laid out by his valet. It was a charming situation for lunch, commanding that wide and magnificent prospect to which I have alluded; but autumn was far advanced, there was a fresh breeze, and the table was ordered indoors. Meanwhile, LISZT laying his hand upon my arm, we passed

through the library, opening into his bed-room, and thence to a little sitting-room (the same which commanded that view of the Campagna). Here stood his grand Erard piano. "As we were talking of bells," he said, "I should like to show you an 'Angelus' which I have just written"; and, opening the piano, he sat down. This was the moment which I had so often and so vainly longed for.

When I left England, it seemed to me as impossible that I should ever hear LISZT play, as that I should ever see MENDELSSOHN, who has been in his grave for thirty-three years. How few of the present generation have had this privilege! At Bayreuth, I had hoped, but no opportunity offered itself, and it is well known that LISZT can hardly ever be prevailed upon to open the piano in the presence of strangers. A favourite pupil, POLIG, who was then with him at the Villa d'Este, told me he rarely touched the piano, and that he himself had seldom heard him—"but," he added with enthusiasm, "when the master touches the keys, it is always with the same incomparable effect, unlike anyone else, always perfect."

"You know," said LISZT, turning to me, "they ring the 'Angelus' in Italy carelessly; the bells swing irregularly, and leave off, and the cadences are often broken up thus": and he began a little swaying passage in the treble—like bells tossing high up in the evening air: it ceased, but so softly that the half-bar of silence made itself felt, and the

listening ear still carried the broken rhythm through the pause. The Abbate himself seemed to fall into a dream; his fingers fell again lightly on the keys, and the bells went on, leaving off in the middle of a phrase. Then rose from the bass the song of the Angelus, or rather, it seemed like the vague emotion of one who, as he passes, hears in the ruins of some wayside cloister the ghosts of old monks humming their drowsy melodies, as the sun goes down rapidly, and the purple shadows of Italy steal over the land, out of the orange west!

We sat motionless—the disciple on one side, I on the other. LISZT was almost as motionless: his fingers seemed quite independent, chance ministers of his soul. The dream was broken by a pause; then came back the little swaying passage of bells, tossing high up in the evening air, the half-bar of silence, the broken rhythm—and the Angelus was rung.

Luncheon being announced, we rose, and LISZT, turning to his young friend POLIG, who occupied an apartment at Este, and enjoys the great master's help in his musical studies: "Go, dear friend," he said, "and join us in about an hour—nay, sooner if you will."

557. *ABBATE AND IL REVERENDO.*

So we sat down in the cozily-furnished little sitting-room—dark, like all the Abbate's suite of apartments, and evidently intended to shut out the sun.

I was still heated with our clambering walk, and LISZT insisted on my keeping on my great-coat, and provided me in addition with a priest's silken skull-cap, playfully remarking, "As you call me 'Abbate,' I shall address you as 'Il Reverendo,' and whenever you come here, you will find this priest's cap ready for you."

The "*hospitalité de garcon*" proved anything but ascetic. A vegetable soup, maccaroni with tomato sauce, a faultless beefsteak or "bistecco" dressed with fried mushrooms, cooked dry; a peculiar salad, composed of a variety of herbs in addition to leeks, onions, lettuce, and fruit, the like of which I can never hope to taste until I lunch again with the Abbate at the Villa d'Este.

We were alone. I need not say that, in such company, the wines seemed to me to possess an ideal fragrance and a Sicilian flavour wholly unlike and incomparably superior to the heavy vintages of Spain. There were some questions about MENDELSSOHN and CHOPIN that I had always wished to ask; but at first the conversation was much more general. We spoke of the curious recent fancy of the Italians for WAGNER'S music; the way his operas had been produced at Bologna, and just then *Rienzi* at Rome. "Yes," he said; "the Italians are beginning to understand more kinds of melody than one; they perceive at last that WAGNER'S melody pervades each part of his score—it is "*la mélodie à plusieurs*

558. ANECDOTES.

étages." This notion of "a melody in flats," or "of several stories," struck me as most apt, as well as humorous. Speaking of WAGNER, I related to him an unhappy occasion on which I had been requested by LORD H—— to try and prevail on WAGNER, when in England, to accompany me to his house one night, where we were to meet a royal princess most anxious to see WAGNER. I reluctantly undertook the mission, but failed to induce the great Maestro to go with me, and so was placed in the unpleasant position of having to apologize on my arrival for his absence. "Ah!" said LISZT, laughing, "a similar thing occurred to me lately: some royalties at Sienna asked me to get WAGNER to meet them; but I knew WAGNER better, and at once declined to charge myself with that commission. Your mention of LORD H—— reminds me that I knew him years ago; indeed, in my young days, I was on one occasion at his house, and, curiously enough, a regrettable event occurred to me also. Some ladies present importuned me to play. I was not unwilling, but I did not quite care for the manner in which I was pressed, and I declined; indeed, I believe I left the house rather abruptly. Well, it was a time when I was playing a good deal in the various capitals of Europe, and much more fuss was being made with me than was perhaps necessary; and then, you know, I was much younger, and I dare say acted hastily; but I have always regretted it."

He spoke very little of his extraordinary successes when

at his zenith, which can only be compared to the sensation produced by PAGANINI. But he spoke, as I have elsewhere stated, with pride of having received the kiss of BEETHOVEN. "Ay," he said, "when I was a very young man, and in public too, it was difficult to get the great man to go and hear rising talent; but my father got SCHINDLER to induce BEETHOVEN to come and hear me—and he embraced me before the whole company." A similar event occurred to JOACHIM, who, when a boy, received the public embrace of MENDELSSOHN after playing a fugue of BACH's.

559. LISZT ON RICHTER, MEYERBEER, WAGNER, AND MENDELSSOHN.

LISZT spoke in the highest terms of HERR RICHTER, at the same time regretting that the Wagner Festivals at the Albert Hall had not been financially more successful. Having been accused, in America and elsewhere, of misrepresenting the relations between WAGNER and MEYERBEER, and knowing that WAGNER would never mention MEYERBEER's name, nor allow anyone to speak of him in his presence, I asked LISZT whether it was true that MEYERBEER had introduced WAGNER to M. JOLY in Paris, with a view to bringing out his *Flying Dutchman*, knowing all the time that M. JOLY was on the point of bankruptcy. "Well," said LISZT, "that is probably true. No one is exactly to blame, if a young unknown man fails to arrive at once at the Grand Opera de Paris; getting up a work there is a question of many months and thousands of pounds. WAG-

NER's libretto was bought for a small sum, his music discarded, and he was practically turned adrift. Afterwards, he was notoriously forced to live by arranging Italian opera tunes for the piano and *cornet-à-piston*. It is possible that MEYERBEER may have been of some small use to WAGNER at first, but WAGNER will not hear of him. MENDELSSOHN had the same antipathy." Now I saw another opportunity: "I have often wondered, in reading MENDELSSOHN's letters," I said, "why his allusions to you are so brief and so few; here and there, we read that you were of the company, that the evening was delightful, and that you or CHOPIN played; and MENDELSSOHN seems to have little more to say, though in his allusions to many of his great contemporaries he is often explicit and detailed enough."

"Ah! well," said LISZT, "MENDELSSOHN's letters have been, to some extent, what is called arranged and selected for publication. There is a good deal which it was not advisable to print, or that couldn't be printed; and then there was something between me and MENDELSSOHN: I am sure I don't quite know what; but at one time, a certain coolness sprang up between us; it was, however, much more between our followers than between us. MENDELSSOHN did not get on with the French: at Paris, for instance, and with reason there; then, at Berlin and Leipsic too he had his difficulties with the musical authorities, some of whom were certainly my friends. The first time I saw MENDELSSOHN was at Berlin; I called in

the morning, about twelve o'clock; he was charming, full of life and vigour, and received me joyously. MADAME MENDELSSOHN pressed me to stay to lunch, and, meaning to go, I still stayed on talking and playing, till suddenly it was six o'clock, and then he said, 'Now you must stay and dine.' So I stayed, and left about nine o'clock, after a delightful day; then the next time we met we had some words about MEYERBEER, whom MENDELSSOHN could not endure, and I spoke rather hotly. I dare say I was in the wrong, but somehow, from that time, we ceased to be quite so cordial, and we did not meet very often; but there was no rupture or quarrel between us, none ever; our partisans quarrelled; but between us personally there was never any real animosity. And then quite late in his career, a year before he died, MENDELSSOHN did a very graceful little thing. He brought me a MS. of BEETHOVEN, a chorus copied in BEETHOVEN'S hand out of MOZART'S *Don Juan*; he knew it was the kind of thing I should value very highly, and he bade me keep it for his sake. Well, I was travelling a good deal—I gave it with other things into my mother's keeping, and I suppose it was shown about, and someone stole it; at any rate, it disappeared; but I always like to remember it, because it proved that, notwithstanding the serious differences which had arisen between our schools and methods before his death, personally he felt kindly towards me down to the last."

The conversation turning on HEINE—"Of course I knew

HEINE. He was one of those original eccentrics whom it is difficult to class: his reputation was a *célébrité d'auberge*. Yes, he alluded to me in some of his prose works not unkindly. I had the misfortune (*maladresse*) to set one of his songs to music."

"How few good poems there are suitable for music!"

"Yes, and how little good music!"

Of PAGANINI he said, "No one who has not heard him can form the least idea of his playing. The fourth string performances, the tunes in harmonics, and the arpeggios used as he used them, were then all new to the public and the players too; they sat staring at him open-mouthed. Everyone can play his music now, but the same impression can never again be made."

560. PAGANINI AND BOTTESINI, ETC.

Of BOTTESINI, the double-bass soloist, he said, "He is the only great player of my time whom I have never heard. He never seemed to be in my direction, and was always moving about, but is settled now."

LISZT was very humorous upon vamped-up reputations, and the airs and graces which musicians give themselves.

"After a bit, in England at least, you must be 'dignified'—that is a good word; the English like a 'dignified professor!'" and he drew himself up like a very Pecksniff, put on a look of solemn and dictatorial gravity, lifting

both hands sideways as it were to keep off all common intruders.

561. BÜLOW, RUBINSTEIN, AND MEDIOCRITIES.

Speaking of BÜLOW and of RUBINSTEIN, he said, "They are two men who stand quite apart from all the rest; still, the general level of pianoforte-playing has immensely risen within the last twenty years. There is, however, a good deal of 'humbug' about some professional reputations"; and pretending to hold very carefully a watering-pot, he added, "Some reputations take a good deal of judicious watering. I could mention some who had the good fortune to marry people who watered them beautifully in the newspapers. It makes some difference, you know. I don't say that you can create a reputation without talent; but the 'humbug' is too often at top, and the 'talent' at the bottom; and in England you are miserably taken in by foreigners. It is your own fault; but the way mediocre foreign talent has been over and over again pushed in England—especially bad singers—is simply scandalous."

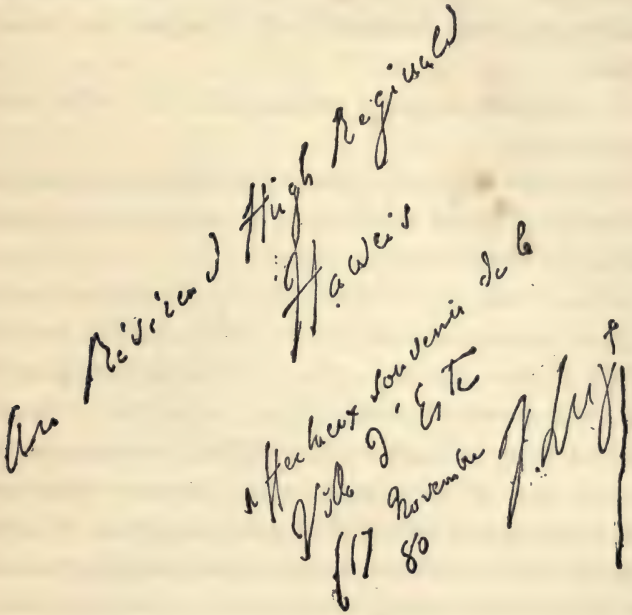
562. LISZT SPEAKS OF CHOPIN.

How interesting it would be to read the memoirs and criticisms of LISZT upon music and musicians for the last fifty years! No one living, perhaps, with the exception of PROFESSOR ELLA, has such a rich store of musical experience and incident to fall back upon.

"I have often wished," I said, "that you had written more of your recollections of those great musicians, artists, and poets with whom you have been connected." I alluded to his charming Life of Chopin.

"Ah!" he said abruptly, "CHOPIN had no life, properly speaking; his was an exclusive, self-centred personality. He lived inwardly—he was silent and reserved, never said much, and people were often deceived about him, and he never undeceived them. People talk of the *style* of CHOPIN, the *touch* of CHOPIN, and of playing like CHOPIN. When he played himself, he played admirably well, and especially his own compositions; but he was supposed to have formed a school of Chopinites, who had the Tradition—and you heard that Mr. *This*, and Madame *That*—they alone could play like CHOPIN—he had formed them—people danced round them, and they affected to have the true Chopin secret. Yes," he said, "it was absurd enough; and CHOPIN looked on, and said nothing; he was very diplomatic—he never troubled himself to stop this cant, and to this day there may be those who play 'like CHOPIN'—who have received the sacred 'Tradition.' C'était comme cela du commencement, ce n'était pas *l'école*, c'était plutôt '*l'église* de CHOPIN!'" The last words were pronounced in a solemn tone, and with a look of mock gravity indescribably humorous. As he rose from table, LISZT said, "You spoke of my sketch of CHOPIN—I have just brought out a new edition of it at Leipsic." We went into the library, and he gave me

a handsome quarto volume of 312 pages, printed in French on fine paper. "Take it," he said; "you will find some forty pages more than in the edition you have read." I opened the volume, and on the frontispiece found that LISZT had written aslant—



I had conceived, ever since I had studied the life and works of CHOPIN, the greatest desire to hear him played by LISZT: indeed, the numbers of those still living who have had this privilege must be very limited. I ventured to say, "CHOPIN always maintained

563. LISZT PLAYS CHOPIN TO ME.

that you were the most perfect exponent of his works. I cannot say how grateful I should be to hear, were it only a fugitive passage of CHOPIN'S, touched by your hand."

"With all the pleasure in the world," replied the immortal pianist; and again I sat down by the grand piano, and humming to him a phrase of op. 37, I begged that it might be that.

"I will play that, and another after it." (The second was op. 48.)

It is useless for me to attempt a description of a performance every phrase of which will be implanted in my memory, and on my heart, as long as I live.

Again, in that room, with its long bright window opening out into the summer-land, we sat in deep shadow—in perfect seclusion; not a sound but the magic notes falling at first like a soft shower of pearls or liquid drops from a fountain —blown spray falling hither and thither, and changing into rainbow tints in its passage, as the harmonic progression kept changing and tossing the fugitive fragments of melody with which that exquisite nocturne opens, until it settles into the calm, happy dream, which seems to rock the listener to sleep with the deep and perfect benison of ineffable rest; then out of the dream, through a few bars, like the uneasy consciousness of a slowly awakening sleeper, and again the interlude, the blown rain of double pearls—until once more the heavenly dream is resumed. I drew my chair gently nearer, I almost held my breath, not to miss a note. There

was a strange concentrated anticipation about Liszt's playing unlike anything I had ever heard—not for a moment could the ear cease listening; each note seemed prophetic of the next, each yielded in importance to the next: one felt that in the soul of the player the whole nocturne existed from the beginning—as one and indivisible, like a poem in the heart of a poet. The playing of the bars had to be gone through seriatim; but there were glimpses of a higher state of intuition, in which one could read thoughts without words, and possess the soul of music, without the intervention of bars and keys and strings; all the mere elements seemed to fade, nothing but perception remained. Sense of time vanished; all was as it were realised in a moment, that moment the Present—the eternal Present—no Past, no Future. Yet I could not help noticing each incident: the perfect, effortless independence of the fingers, mere obedient ministers of the master's thought; the complete trance of the player—living in the ideal world, and reducing the world of matter about him to the flimsiest of unreal shadows; and I had time to notice the unconscious habits of the master, which have already passed into historic mannerisms in his disciples, like Cardinal Newman's stooping gait, Garibaldi's half closing of the eyes, or Victor Emmanuel's toss of the head. So I noticed the first finger and thumb drawn together to emphasize a note, or the fingers doubled up, then lifted in a peculiar manner, with a gentle sweep in the middle of a phrase—things in

which those are determined to be like the master who can be like him in nothing else; also the peculiar repercussion resonance, since reduced to something like a science by RUBINSTEIN, and the caressing touch, which seemed to draw the soul of the piano out of it almost before the finger reached the key-board. When LISZT passed silently to op. 48, he arrived at some stiff bravura passages, which called forth his old vigour. Yet here all was perfect; not a note slurred over or missed; the old thunder woke beneath his outstretched hands; the spirits of the vasty deep were as obedient as ever to their master's call. With the last chord he rose abruptly; abruptly we came out of the dim, enchanted land of dreams; the common light of day was once more around me. "Now, you must be off!" he exclaimed; indeed, I had barely time to catch my tram for Rome; "but," he added, "I have something I wish you to take to BACHE and DANNREUTHER"; and he took out three bronze medals, giving me the third to keep; the design was by a Roman artist of great merit. On one side was LISZT's own profile, on the other a star-crowned Fame holding a palm-branch.

564. "I AM TOO OLD."

Before I left, I asked LISZT if I might give some account in print of the delightful day I had spent in his company, so that the hearts of his many friends and admirers in England might be gladdened by some account of him.

"Whatever you will," he good-naturedly replied; "write what you like, and let me see it when it appears."

LISZT changes his residence three times every year: from Rome to Weimar, from Weimar to Pesth, and at Pesth he is usually occupied in bringing out or conducting some of his works. But he is determined to cross the water no more. He hates the sea; indeed, I am told that he objects even to going over the suspension-bridge at Florence. I ventured to say to him, "In England we have heard of LISZT, but already he is a kind of mythus. 'His legend,' as M. RENAN would say, 'has begun to form.' People are beginning to ask, 'Was there indeed ever such a person?' Come over and prove to us that he still exists." But he only shook his head. "I am too old; I cannot come to England."

. . . . .

LISZT was at Rome again in 1881. He happened to be driving in an open carriage just in front of mine, when all Rome went on a pilgrimage to St. Lorenzo Cemetery on All Souls day. We saluted as we passed. I thought him looking more worn than in the previous year, but the old radiant smile and frank courtesy were the same; the fact is, he had fallen on a staircase at Weimar in summer, and was obliged to be very careful. He is not going to the Villa D'Este this year at Tivoli. It is too cold, although the CARDINAL HOHENLÖHE promised to warm it well with stoves. Last year

565. ALL SOULS DAY.

about this time, when I was there with him, on a second visit with my wife, the hot November sun beat so fiercely down on our luncheon-table, spread on a broad balcony overlooking the whole Campagna, that we had to move into the shade, and the Swiss valet walked round and round, taking innumerable flies out of our wine. But the morning and evening were colder there than they are at Rome, and November is usually cold enough in Rome.

"I am going," said GREENOUGH the sculptor, to me, 'to look in on the Abbate LISZT to-night, at the Hotel Alberti."

"I will be of the party," I said.

566. LISZT AT ROME.

We were ushered into a little room at about nine o'clock. The Abbate was seated at a game of cards with his grand-daughter the BARONNE DE BÜLOW and an Italian gentleman. He received us with his old delightful grace and *bonhomie*. I insisted upon his finishing his game of cards.

"Where are you staying, and how long have you been here?"

"Why, I left my card and address some days ago."

"Ah, leave me another, and write the address again."

"I will leave you six, and call every day, just to ask after you," said I, laughing.

'Then I will give you six invitations."

"But," I said, "you never asked me to your birthday festival."

"You are of those who are always asked."

"If I had been at Rome, I should certainly have slipped in."

"I shall receive again; you shall yet come," said LISZT; and then he sat down to finish his game as we others talked to each other, the Abbate turning round to drop a word here and there, just enough to show that he was not indifferent to our presence. They told me he had to be kept very quiet, chiefly because he insisted upon getting through so much work, and I felt that callers should be discreet and not stay too long.

Presently the game was over, and LISZT, pushing aside the cards, turned to us, and I had a few words with him.

567. LISZT ON RUBINSTEIN, MENTER, WIRTZ.

The grand piano was open behind him, but we were not to hear it. I told him of the piano-recital mania in London last season: He said of RUBINSTEIN, "He is the King of all pianists now before the public, he must carry all before him"; and of SOPHIE MENTER, whom he had specially charged me to hear, "No woman can touch her—in every style she is superb." He said he was at work upon orchestral composition, which, he intimated, the public did not always care about; and I spoke of our painter WATTS, who now delights to paint for himself, and often declares that his favourite conceptions are those least understood by the public. "Ah!" said LISZT; "but here is an artist," turning to a

stranger present, "who paints for the public and *is* appreciated"; it was his graceful way of turning the talk off himself; and then he went on to speak of that eccentric Belgian artist, WIRTZ, whom he had known. The WIRTZ gallery at Brussels is very famous now, though LISZT seemed to fancy WIRTZ was still little known. "His creations," he said, "were strange and fantastic, he was voted mad, and the critics abused and laughed at him. I remember he had a great studio, and at one end a kind of pulpit; he used to get up in it and preach against the critics and society, and declaim about all sorts of things." LISZT told a good anecdote about him. "He used to send these odd pictures to the Salon year after year, which were always returned; the judges would have nothing to say to him. Well, he happened to become possessed of a veritable RUBENS, and the malicious idea occurred to him to put his own name to it, and send it up to the Salon. The judges, taking it for more WIRTZ rubbish, sent it back. Poor WIRTZ, you can imagine that he went up into his pulpit next time with a good text!"

I said to him later, "So you will not come to England?"

"I have travelled so much; I have gone about the world till I am tired. I change residences, as it is, three times a year: Pesth, Weimar, Rome; and if I went about more, I could not get through the work which I have set myself to do. The first time I was in England, I was taken there by

COUNT ESTERHAZY; you know, he was a great friend of GEORGE IV. That was in 1824."

"You were at Antwerp last year; we all thought you might have come across."

"I was present," he replied; "I shall never go across again."

568. LISZT AND THE AMERICAN LADY.

An American lady here said to LISZT the other day, without much discretion or tact, "Ah, Abbate, if you would only come to America, you could make a large fortune!" forgetting that LISZT had made and spent immense fortunes, and had left quite as much as he wanted.

"Madame," replied the great *virtuoso*, with that exquisite touch of courteous but satirical humour of which he is a master, "if *you* stood in need of that large fortune, believe me I would go."

We spoke of WAGNER, and I noticed how he had infected the most opposite schools, how even VERDI had drunk deep, many portions of "Aïda" being quite Wagneresque.

"Yes, he is well in the air now; everything breathes him at last."

"And the *Parsifal*?" I said; "is that new drama really coming off?"

"Surely, next year in July, at Bayreuth. We shall have all the world there."

"All the Wagnerites," I said.

"No, no, all sorts; it is the fashion now; *tous les badauds s'en mélent!*" which might be rendered in elegant American, "Every cockney is just on him."

I understood that the Abbate would retire early, and we took our leave. I can see his noble figure now, dressed in a long black priest's gown; as he rose with us, took a candle and came out into the passage, the light fell flickeringly upon those well-known and majestic features; the thick white hair seemed to crown him, falling straight on either side to his shoulders; he looked like an old-world figure carved by MICHAEL ANGELO, and standing in a niche apart, always the same strange genial striking combination which has captivated society throughout Europe and been the wonder of the musical world for fifty years, always unconsciously scenic, statuesque, and withal superbly human—such will long linger in my memory the Abbate FRANZ LISZT at Rome in 1881.

569. GOOD NIGHT.

END.

Postlude.

SONGS OF THE GOLDEN SEA
MELODIES OF THE MIDDAY
HARMONIES OF THE SUNSET
ECHOES OF YOU ALL
DIE OVER THE WATERS
WAVES OF HUMAN FEELING
EBB AND FLOW OF EMOTION
LIFE AND DEATH AND DELIVERANCE
I CAN HEAR YOUR VOICES
LIKE THE SONGS OF THE ANGELS
EARTH-SWEETNESS AND EARTH-PAIN
NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM
O THE JOY AND THE PRESENCE
AND THE ETERNAL FRESHNESS
OF THE INVISIBLE COUNTRY
FULL OF THE RINGING VOICES
FULL OF THE TIDAL PULSES
SONGS OF THE GOLDEN SEA

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